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"I was *hot* for aliens..."

Jean Genet, French author
(mistranslated by Emmanuel Strikneen)

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reviews

This month's round-up includes the superlative *Powermonger* – even BETTER than *Populous*!

Powermonger: Bullfrog, developers of *Populous*, have done it again – and how! See pages 42/43

Past and present: the C64 console showing, gasp, *International Soccer* and featuring on our mammoth games wallchart – free with this issue

Silent Service II – with a great pedigree, could this be the ultimate sub sim? Check out page 81

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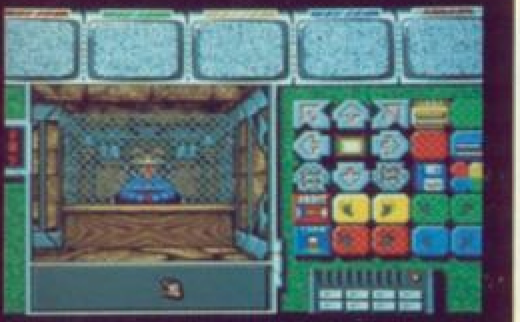
That's our new Pink section, redesigned and refurbished to give you the industry's most comprehensive reference section for gamesplayers. In addition to the hardware and software listings, we've introduced monthly columns for nine major computer and console formats, so if you own an ST, Amiga, PC, Spectrum, Amstrad, C64, Megadrive, Sega Master, or Gameboy you can turn to the Pinks each month for machine specific news and gossip. Adventure fans will find a new regular tips section hosted by Pat Winstanley, and retailer Dale Bradford begins a regular Pink Piece that gives you the industry viewpoint from another angle. Not only that, but you still get the indispensible ACE Diary, giving you monthly run-downs on release dates and events; the ACE Deals section with news of freebies just round the corner, and of course the ACE Charts and Stockmarket, keeping you up to date with the hottest games around.

in the
PINK
contents



Captive - combining *Dungeon Master* style graphics with excellent gameplay. ACE rated on pages 48/49

READY TO SHRED

ACE turns Turtle this month, but we haven't neglected those of you with a hunger for heavyweight gaming. *Wildfire,* the extraordinary sequel to *Midwinter; Simulcra,* a stunningly playable *Virus* derivative from Microstyle; and *Captive,* an excellent combination of *Dungeon Master* graphics, RPG, and arcade action are just a few of the treats in this issue. We've also checked out the emerging CDTV software scene and highlighted a couple of development projects – the first wave of what promises to become a flood over the next six months. Plus news from Japan, Gameboy *Paperboy* and, when you've finished, a chance to relax in the Living Room of the Future in our CES preview feature.

◄ Some of the original artwork for *Xiphos* (page 44), notable for the best graphics ever in a space trading/combat scenario

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THIS IS A STICK-UP!

Due to a production error, the index was incorrectly printed. This panel packs the punches...

SHRED HOT!

First glimpses of UK *Turtles* on page 26, plus details on how you could grab £100 worth of Turtle goodies

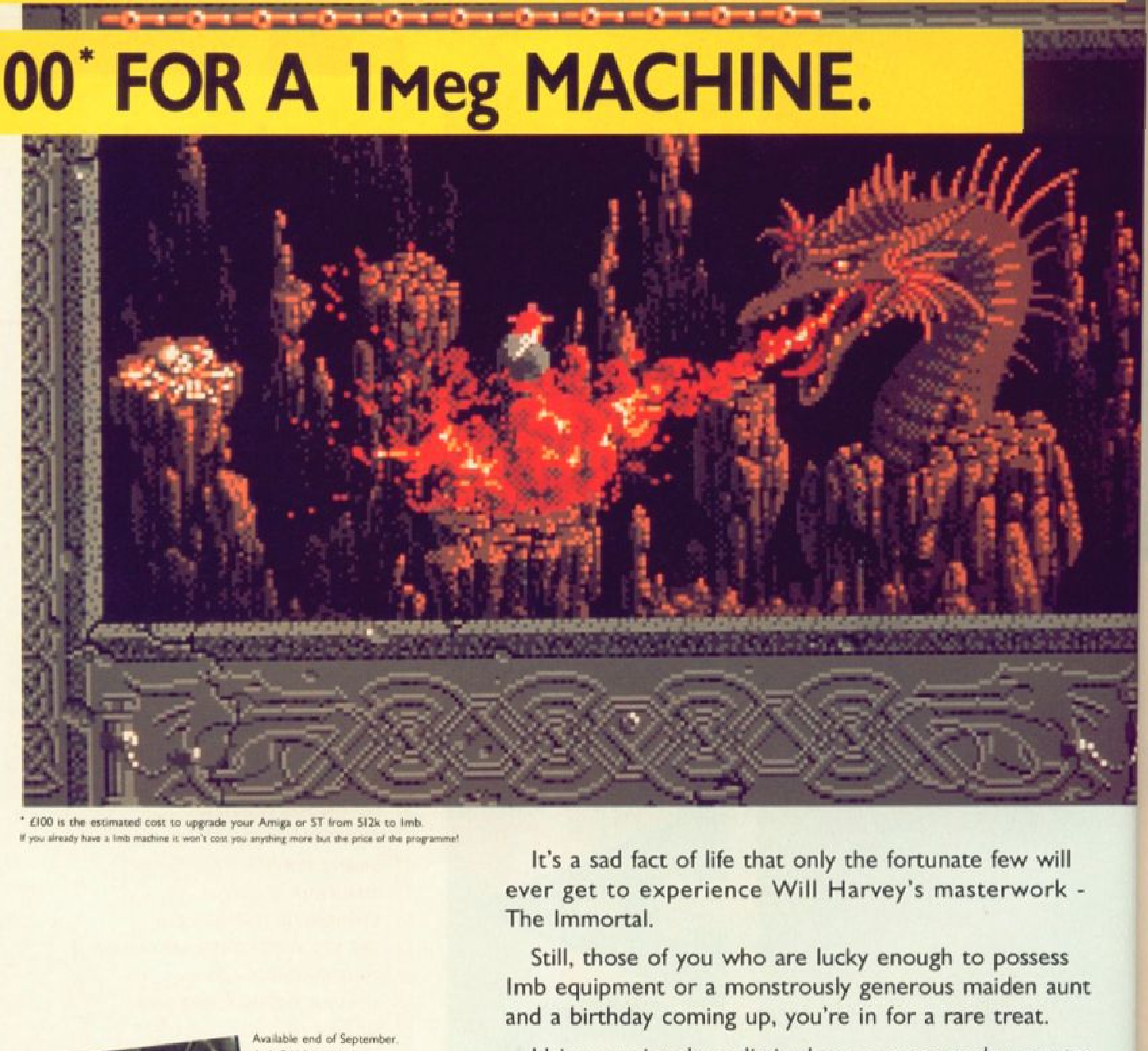
Wildfire - the sequel to the excellent *Midwinter* - is currently under development at Maelstrom. See pp 17-19

MIDWINTER THAWS OUT!

Roving ACE reporter, Rik Haynes, takes an epic journey from Euston Station this month... in search for the sequel to *Midwinter*. Read how Mike '*Lords of Midnight*' Singleton and Maelstrom Games are creating *the* megagame of 1990. Discover the secrets of fractal graphics and human generation. "There are 40-50 major missions in *Wildfire*, each has the scope of *Midwinter*," boasts Singleton. . Go on baby, light your *Wildfire*. It all starts on page 17

OCTOBER 1990

YOU'LL NEED IMAGINATION, SKILL, DARING... AND ERR... £100* FOR A 1Meg MACHINE.



* £100 is the estimated cost to upgrade your Amiga or ST from 512k to 1mb.
If you already have a 1mb machine it won't cost you anything more but the price of the programme!

It's a sad fact of life that only the fortunate few will ever get to experience Will Harvey's masterwork - The Immortal.

Still, those of you who are lucky enough to possess 1mb equipment or a monstrously generous maiden aunt and a birthday coming up, you're in for a rare treat.

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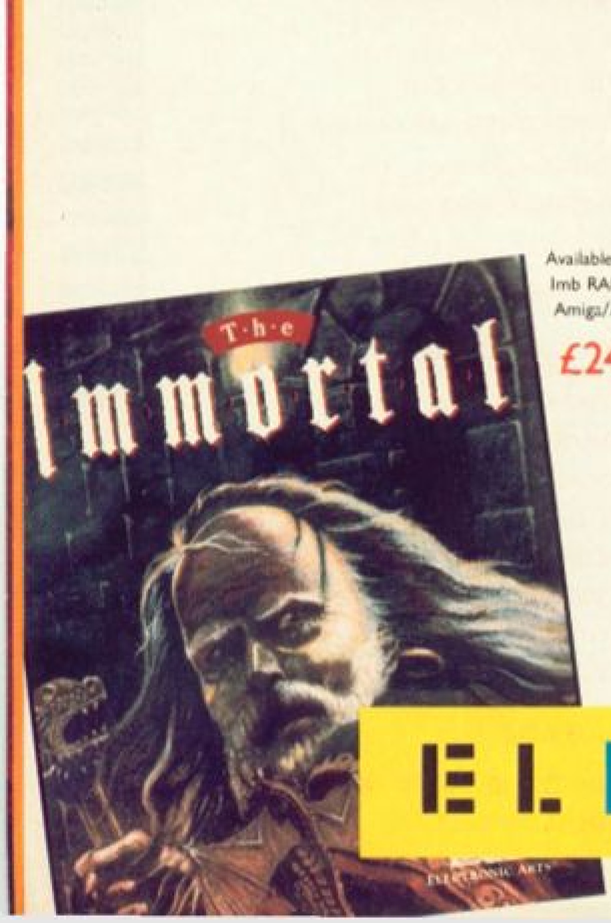

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LAP-03
268
AUTOMATIC
GAMEGEAR
SEGA

SEGA GAMEGEAR colour handheld console (pic supplied by ASCII Corporation).

GOING CONSOLE CRAZY

Rik Haynes investigates the latest consoles to hit the circuit

Are you ready to become a console cowboy? Are consoles really taking over? ACE looks at the leading consoles on the market and asks the UK's top software houses for their opinions and plans...

C64 Games System (£99.99), console version of the C64, supplied with four-game compilation cartridge: *Klax* (Domark), *Fiendish Freddy* (Mindscape), *Flimbo's Quest* (System Three) and *International Soccer* (Commodore). Commodore believes there will be at least 100 C64 cartridges available before Christmas. Peter Bilotta, Managing Director of Mirrorsoft, states, "Mirrorsoft want to make sure we produce the right type of game for each console". Mark Strachan, joint Managing Director of Domark, says: "Domark is producing five titles on the C64 console including *Vindicators* and *Cyberball*. For the GX4000 we'll have *Klax* and *Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters* – plus three other games. All ten titles will hopefully be available for Christmas". Strachan adds, "Consoles will be much bigger this year, but the Spectrum and C64 micros aren't blown out of the water yet". Other companies producing C64 cartridges include Mindscape and Microprose. Peter Jones of Microprose says, "We'll probably produce classic games like *Silent Service* and *Gunship* – and new products such as *Rick Dangerous II*, *Betrayal* and *International Soccer Challenge*". US Gold is considering the following C64 carts: *California Games, Infiltrator, Impossible Mission II, Leaderboard and Gauntlet II.* But Geoff Brown, Managing Director of US Gold, states: "We'll still support C64 cassette and disk users".

Amstrad GX4000 (£99.99), console version of the CPC micro with enhanced audio-visual hardware and *Burning Rubber* games cartridge (see pages 119-120 for further details). Ocean will be converting *Robocop II, Batman - The Movie, Plotting, Operation Thunderbolt, Chase HQ and Shadow Warriors.* Unfortunately, Ocean was unavailable for comment as ACE went to press. Other GX4000 games include: *Kick Off II* (Anco), *Crazy Cars 2* (Titus) and *Pro Tennis Tour* (Ubisoft). Electronic Arts currently has no plans to develop titles on either the GX4000 or C64 console because they are "too European". Geoff Brown disagrees, "I want the Amstrad console to be successful because it's British. US Gold will be releasing *Epyx Worlds of Sport* and *Strider II* on the GX4000".

NINTENDO SUPER FAMICOM (pic courtesy of ASCII Corporation).

Nintendo Super Famicom (£TBA). ACE has heard this new 16-bit console will be launched in Japan during November at a price of 25000yen (£100). It apparently features a customised 16-bit central processor and incorporates a DMA circuit to speedup graphics and sound functions. The clock can be automatically switched to 1.79MHz, 2.68MHz or 3.58MHz. The CPU can access up to 12Mb of memory. The basic unit comes with 1278K RAM and 64K V-RAM. Eight sounds can be played at the same time using its 16-bit PCM stereo sampler. A 32KHz sampling option is also available. It is reported that Nintendo will have thirty titles available at launch, including *Populous* (Electronic Arts), *Dungeon Master* (FTL) and *Sim City* (Maxis). No European release date has been set for the Super Famicom.

Sega Gamegear (£TBA), a colour handheld console with similar technology to the Sega Master System but can't use its games cartridges. It features Z80A at 3.58MHz, 3.2" screen with resolution of 160x146, displays 32 colours out of a palette of 4096, 8K RAM, 16K V-RAM, three tone PSG sound and one noise channel. Gamegear has a built-in speaker and 3.5mm headphone jack. It is powered by six AA batteries. Up to eight players can link-up for multi-player games. Gamegear will supposedly cost 19800yen (£79). A tuner to turn the Gamegear into a TV costs 12800yen (£51). Sega is using several Japanese software houses to develop and transfer games such as Japan Computer System, Nihon Tele-Net, Micro Cabin, Wolf Team, Kaneko Works, Sigma Trade, System Soft and Namuko. The games to be developed and transferred include: *Space Harrier, Out Run, Wonderboy, Monaco GP* and *Future Zone III*. Gamegear cartridge prices will be in the region of 3500yen (£14). Rumours suggest Origin's *Ultima* will also be released. It is believed Gamegear will be launched in Europe sometime in the first half of '91 – although Nick Alexander, the Managing Director of Virgin/Mastertronic (UK distributor of the Sega Master and Megadrive), thinks a British Gamegear price of between £100-£150 more likely.

Sega Megadrive (£189.99) to be launched in September with 20 games titles officially available over here before Christmas, including *Space Harrier II, Ghouls 'n' Ghosts* and *Golden Axe*. Cart prices range from £29.99-£39.99, the Powerbase adapter (£39.99) lets you plug-in and play Master System games. New Megadrive games include *Populous* (Electronic Arts), *Batman – The Movie* (Sunsoft) and *Super Monaco GP*. An add-on CD-ROM drive for the Megadrive has been delayed until Spring 1991 – for an expected price of 40000yen (£160).

Nintendo Gameboy (£69.99), handheld console comes with Tetris games cartridge. A wealth of good quality Gameboy games are already available, including *Batman – The Movie* (Sunsoft), *Double Dragon* (Technos), *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (Konami), *Paperboy* (Mindscape) and *Super Mario Land*. Geoff Heath, Managing Director of Mindscape UK, says, "Mindscape supports Nintendo because of the huge American and Japanese markets. We have *Days of Thunder* and *Gauntlet II* coming out on Gameboy later this year."

Sega Master System (£79.99). US Gold is supporting the Master this Christmas with *Gauntlet, Impossible Mission, Paperboy and Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*. Other USG games like *Leaderboard* and *Heroes of the Lance* will be converted over to the Master next year.

Nintendo Entertainment System (£79.99), bundled with *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* (Konami) cartridge game for a 'limited period' from September. Rumours suggest the *Turtles* cart and price will be dropped when initial stocks shell-out.

Lynx (£179.99), software is very scarce, Tengen is the only software developer really supporting the Lynx. Conversions of *Paperboy, Klax* and *Vindicators* are on their way before Christmas.

Which console should you buy? As Geoff Brown puts it, "There are no winners or losers at the moment". This feeling is shared by most of the other software house bosses I spoke to. "We want the micro and console to live happily together," says Peter Bilotta. If it's any help to you, my personal fave console decks are currently the Sega Megadrive and Nintendo Gameboy. These, along with the Commodore C64 Games System and Amstrad GX4000 video games consoles will be launched at CES (Earl's Court, 15-16 September, 10am-6pm). See page 131 for the ACE opinion on this dilemma.

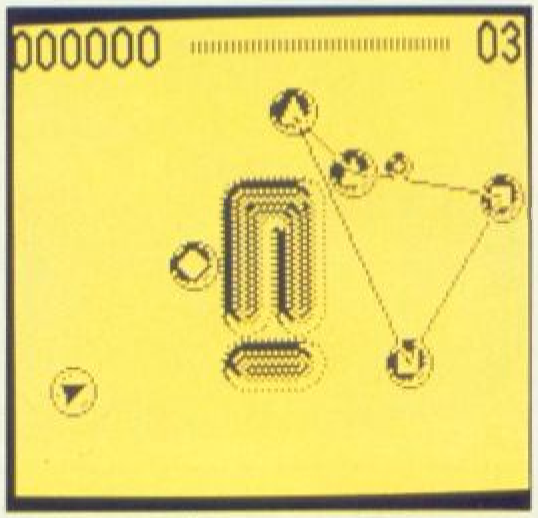
GAMEBOY GETS E-MOTIONAL

"Are you smart? Do you have quick reflexes? Are you good enough for this game?" US Gold's 890-Rated arcade style puzzle game *E-Motion* has been converted over to the Gameboy.

Released by Accolade and retitled to *The Game Of Harmony*, this original and addictive title is "an arcade game for the new age in which players must use a combination of strategy, concentration and quick reflexes".

Harmony gameplay is simple but effective. "You're a single spinning sphere facing a series of 50 fantastic computer generated puzzles. Your goal? Knock similar balls together and make them disappear. Sounds simple? It's not. Each puzzle is different and requires a different strategy. Hit the wrong balls together and they multiply. If you don't clear the screen in time, the whole thing explodes. Beat this baby and you can call yourself good. Until then, you're just a pretender."

Could this be the start of synergy software? "Strategic thinking x quick reflexes=total addiction." The Spectrum, Amiga, ST and PC versions of *E-Motion* were reviewed back in ACE 32. We hope to have a review sample of Gameboy *Harmony* in a couple of months.



Love, life and HARMONY on the Gameboy.

DIAL 0898 555563 NOW!

ACE
on the line

The ACE Interactive News Line is the only way to get a weekly update on the latest games gossip, future games technology and games currently in development. You can also win special prizes. The News Line is updated every Wednesday afternoon. Calls cost 38p per minute (peak), 25p per minute (off-peak). You're just a phone-call away from the future...

ELIMINATE VIDEO THUMB

Only the Americans can produce a product like the Thumb Master. I quote: "Thumb Master is the hottest new home video game accessory. A must for home video game enthusiasts of all ages (six years to adult). It covers and helps protect the thumb against the soreness that results from pushing the buttons on handheld control pads of home video game systems. Neoprene's flexibility enables free movement and agility of the thumb. It is form fitting and will not slip off the thumb. Thumb Master comes in seven hot colors – Black, Blue, Aqua, Purple, Fluorescent Green, Pink and Hot Pink – in small, medium and large sizes."

ACE wonders when flavoured Thumb Masters will be released. If you're actually interested in purchasing a Thumb Master contact: Bachiero Creations, PO Box 10258, Torrance, CA 90505, USA.

THUMB MASTER

ACE gives this a big thumbs up!

DELUXEPAINT HITS ST

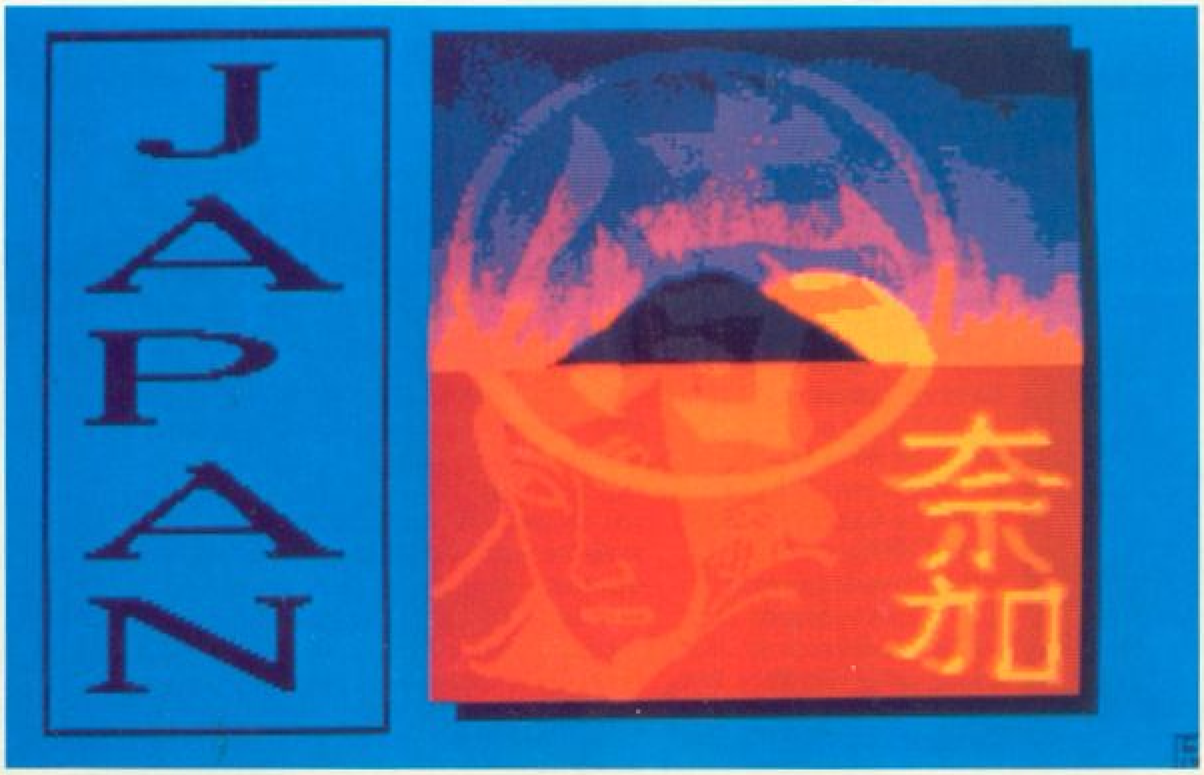
Electronic Arts is finally going to release its *DeluxePaint* art package onto the ST. This popular program is already 'the' graphics software standard on the Amiga – it is used by every games developer in the biz. Now EA is confidently stating that *DeluxePaint ST* is "the ultimate graphics workstation for the ST".

"*DeluxePaint ST* combines paint, animation and printing in one package. Its art and animation facilities are completely usable in 512K, and it boasts more drawing modes, drawing tools and option than any other ST graphic utility."

EA is packing a comprehensive array of features into *DeluxePaint ST*, including realtime magnification in every tool mode, fully controllable four-point bezier curves, nine drawing modes (such as smear, cycle, blend and tint), multi-coloured airbrushes allowing mixing of colours, stencils for protecting specified areas of the screen, proportional colour fonts with six points of kerning, full font editor, three print styles (ordered, halftone and random), multiple printer resolutions, vertical and horizontal printing, and colour poster printing.

DeluxePaint ST supports the extended STE colour palette and can read or write all major graphic formats including Amiga IFF. It will be released in late September for an introductory price of £49.99dk (rising to £59.99 from the beginning of December).

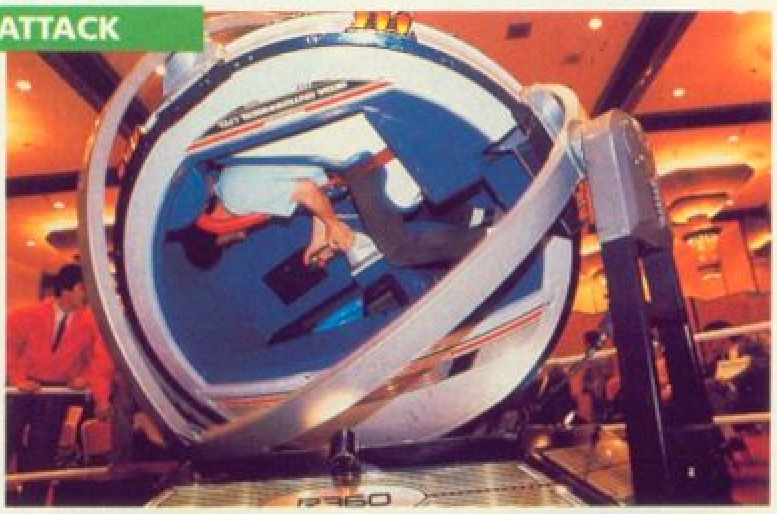
Turning Japanese with DeluxePaint ST.



ACE IN JAPAN

What's fun in the land of the Rising Sun? Find out courtesy of this new monthly update by Rik Haynes, with help from Masato Niizeki and ASCII Corporation...

360° ARCADE ATTACK



Sega is following its hydro arcade hits of *Space Harrier, After Burner, Galaxy Force II* and *Super Monaco GP* with R-360. This new coin-op sensation has two servo motors (power units) and servo driver (controller) to turn its cockpit 360°. Games will never 'feel' the same again. You'll actually slide, swing and swoop as you blast that end of level sprite. *G-Loc* is the only game available on this new system at present, but Sega is currently developing more thrilling games to coincide with R-360's official debut later in the autumn. Sega's next project is to build large-scale amusement centers all over Japan. These will, of course, feature the R-360!

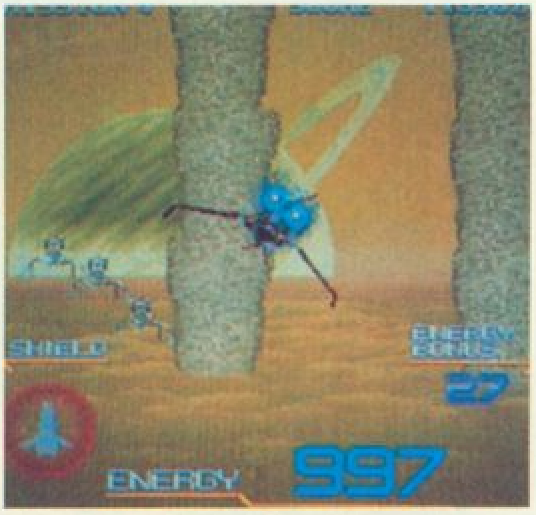
TOUR OF THE UNIVERSE

An exciting new space travel simulation has just opened in Osaka. The Tour of the Universe starts with you receiving a personal ID card at the check-in gate. A transit lift then takes you to the world of 2019. You enter the 21st C with a brief history of space and details of your travel plans (route map). Don't forget the 2019 duty-free space goodies. This is a no pain ride – you get a vaccine shot in the med-lab before you blast. The space shuttle to Jupiter flys at 90% of the speed of light. The tour costs 2000yen (£8) adults, 1500yen (£6) students and 1000yen (£4) children. It's open every day of the year from 10:00am to 9:00pm.

TOUR OF THE UNIVERSE

GALAXY FORCE II

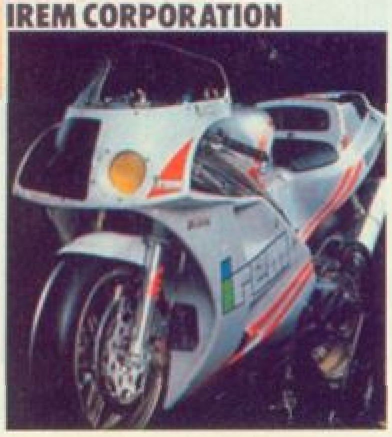
The classy three dee Sega shoot'em-up, *Galaxy Force II*, has been converted to the Fujitsu FM Towns by CRI (CSK Research Institute). It costs 9800yen (£39). CRI also handled the excellent FM Towns conversions of *Afterburner* and *Out Run*. Games releases are starting to pick-up on this 32-bit Compact Disc micro. CD-ROM conversions of Indiana Jones and the *Last Crusade, Dungeon Master, Sim City* and *Populous* are now readily available in Japanese stores.



R-TYPE RIDERS

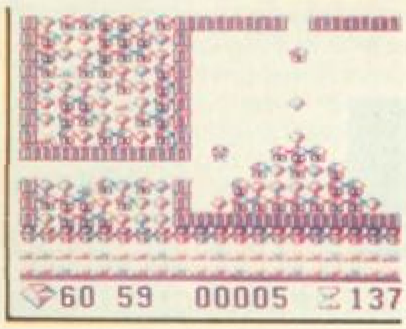
Irem, a leading Japanese games house responsible for the cult coin-op *R-Type*, is sponsoring two top motorbike riders for professional racing.

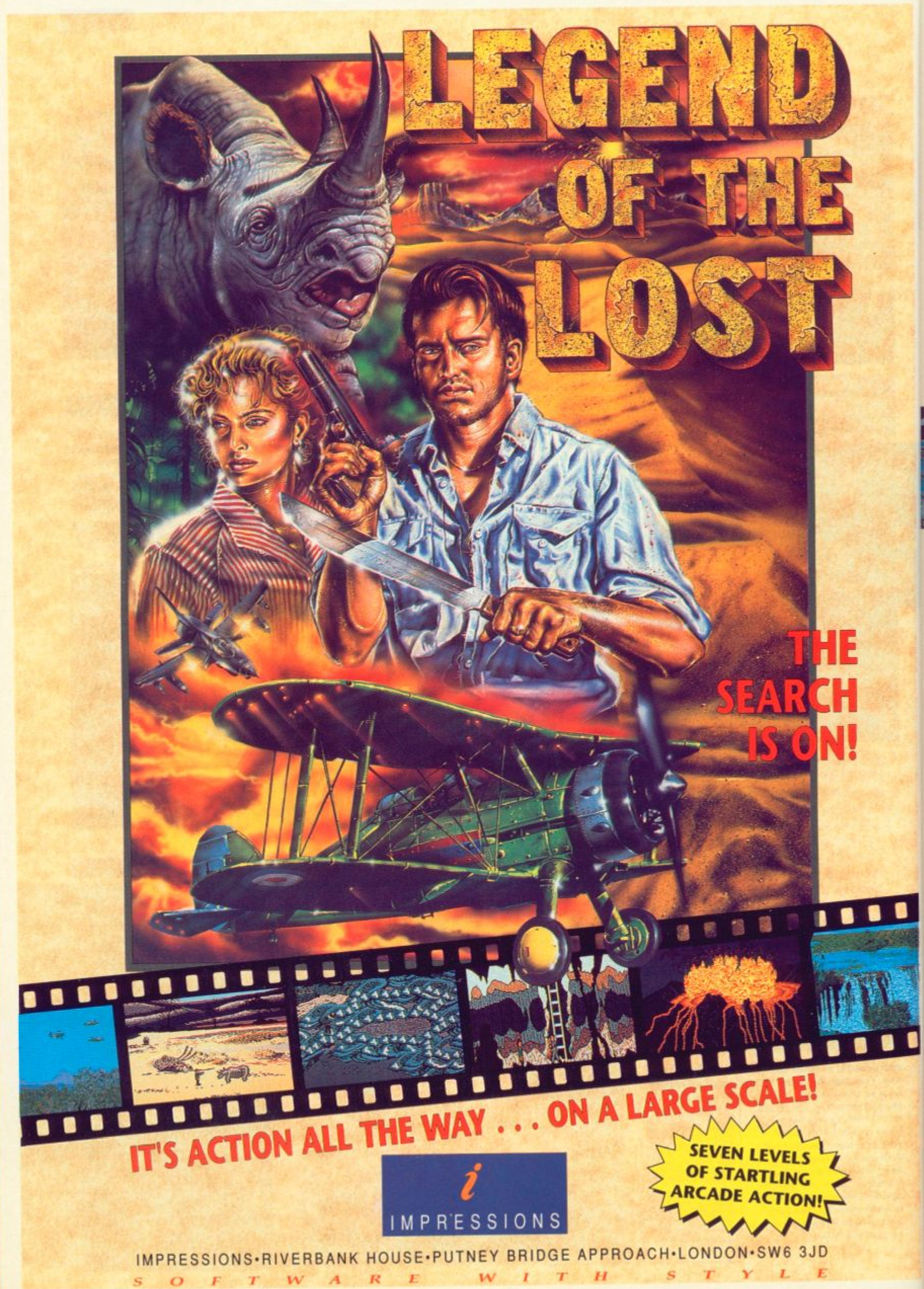
IREM CORPORATION



BOULDERDASH

Boulderdash, the infuriatingly playable C64 classic from First Star Software, has just made an appearance on the Gameboy. Victor Musical Industries converted this Chris Grey and Peter Liepa arcade puzzle game onto Nintendo's mono hand-held console. Most C64 *Boulderdash* veterans (including Steve Cooke and myself) agree it would make a perfect Gameboy release. We can't wait to grab a copy... look out for the ACE review.

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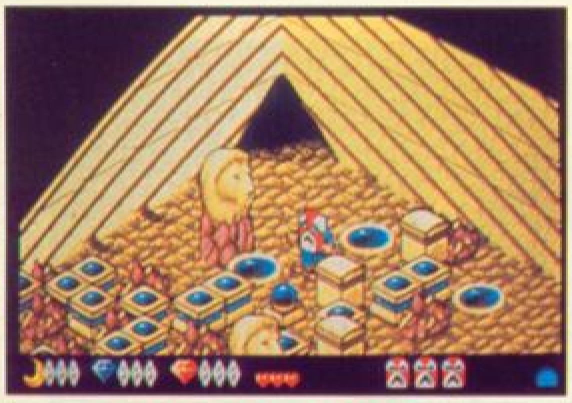
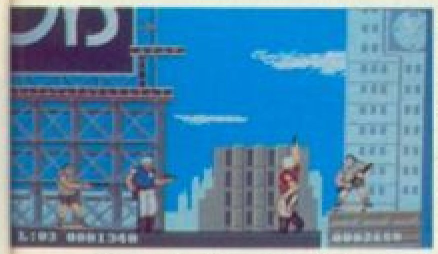


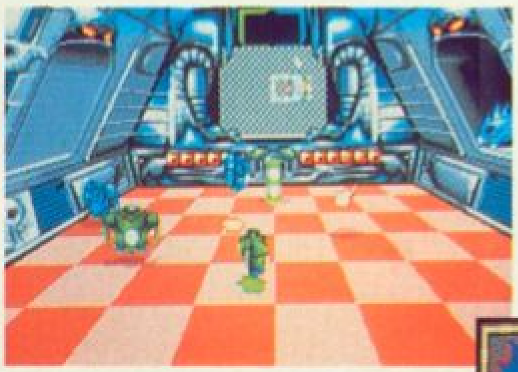
VOODOO NIGHTMARE

"It's dead big and well wiggy!" Boots Parker takes on spiders, scorpions and snakes in darkest Africa. Dodge blowdarts or suffer temporary blindness, paralysis, sleep and hyper-activity. "A monkey will cling to your back and harass you until you have found enough bananas to satisfy him." Palace Software will release this on Amiga and ST at the end of October.

ESWAT



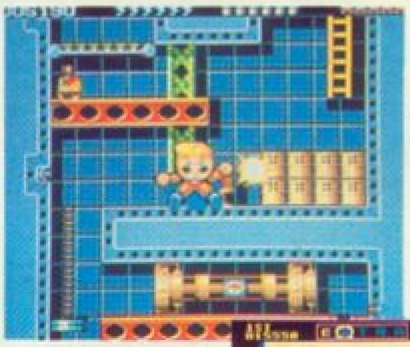
Police the future with Enhanced Special Weapons and Tactics. Eat your heart out Robocop. US Gold multiformat release for later this year. See the Sega Megadrive review on page 91.



FIREBALL

"*Fireball* combines the skill of soccer, the speed of ice hockey and the strategy of rollerball." Freak at the floor scroll, gasp at the guardians. "The players are encased in a robotic total-body armour knicknamed the Oven." Amiga and ST release from Microprose.

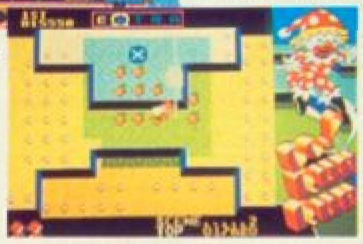
RICK DANGEROUS II



Tricky Ricky is back. Side splitting cartoon graphics are a definite hit in *RD II*. Rick dies, Rick expands, Rick-o-mortis sets in. Fortunately the game is compulsive enough to keep you coming back for more dealings with the Fat Man. Out for Amiga and ST by Micropose. ACE review next month.

MR DO! RUN RUN

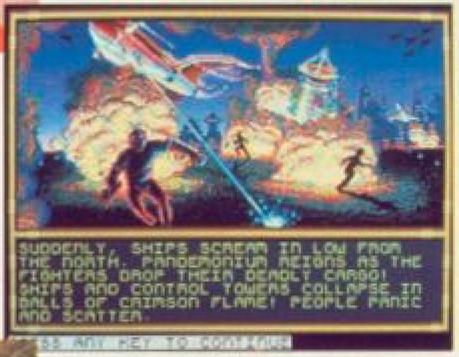
_Mr Do_'s just doin' the do, and you can too. Based around the classic cult coin-op. From Electrocoin Software for £14.99dk on ST and Amiga. Start of a new Arcade Classics label with releases every few weeks. Luther De Gale, the black-belt boss of Electrocoin Software, explains: "The Arcade Classics label supplies the playability and the fun, but with improved graphical and internal features which bring these products into the 90's without losing any of their original appeal."



DREAMS AND VISIONS

Rik Haynes takes a trip to tomorrow...

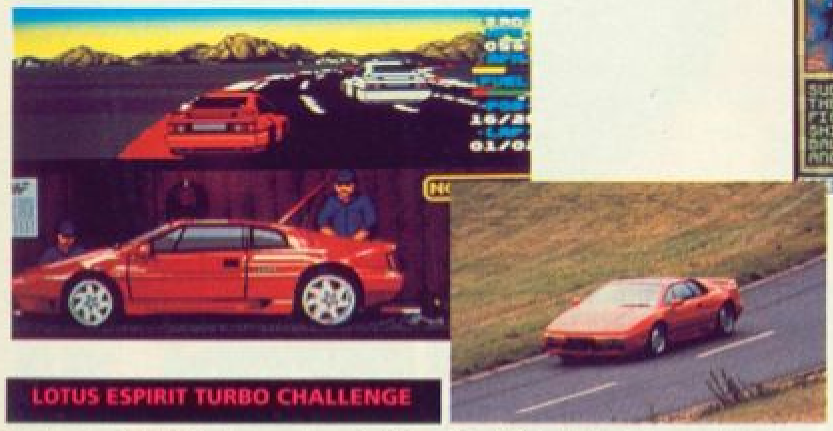
BUCK ROGERS - COUNTDOWN TO DOOMSDAY



SUDDENLY, SHIPS SCREAM IN LOW FROM THE NORTH. PANDEMONIUM REIGNS AS THE FIGHTERS DROP THEIR DEADLY CARGO! SHIPS AND CONTROL TOWERS COLLAPSE IN BALLS OF CRIMSON FLAME! PEOPLE PANIC AND SCATTER.

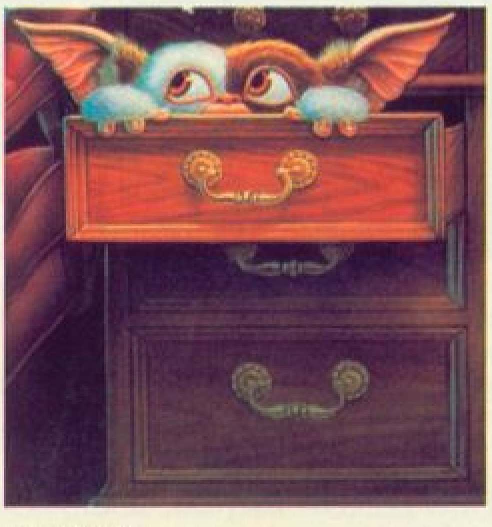
SS ANY KEY TO CONTINUE

Buck Rogers, pilot of the future, is making mega bucks for TSR. "US Gold will be fully exploiting the cross-marketing opportunities that Buck Rogers offers. Indeed, we have already signed a cross-promotional deal with Penguin Books." For cross read gross? Countdown to Doomsday will use a similar game system to Pool of Radiance. Be NEO (New Earth *Organisation) and foil RAM* (Russo-American Mercantile). Due in September on Amiga, PC and C64 disk. No other versions are planned. "Buck Rogers is a Trademark owned by, and used under license from, The Dille Family Trust."



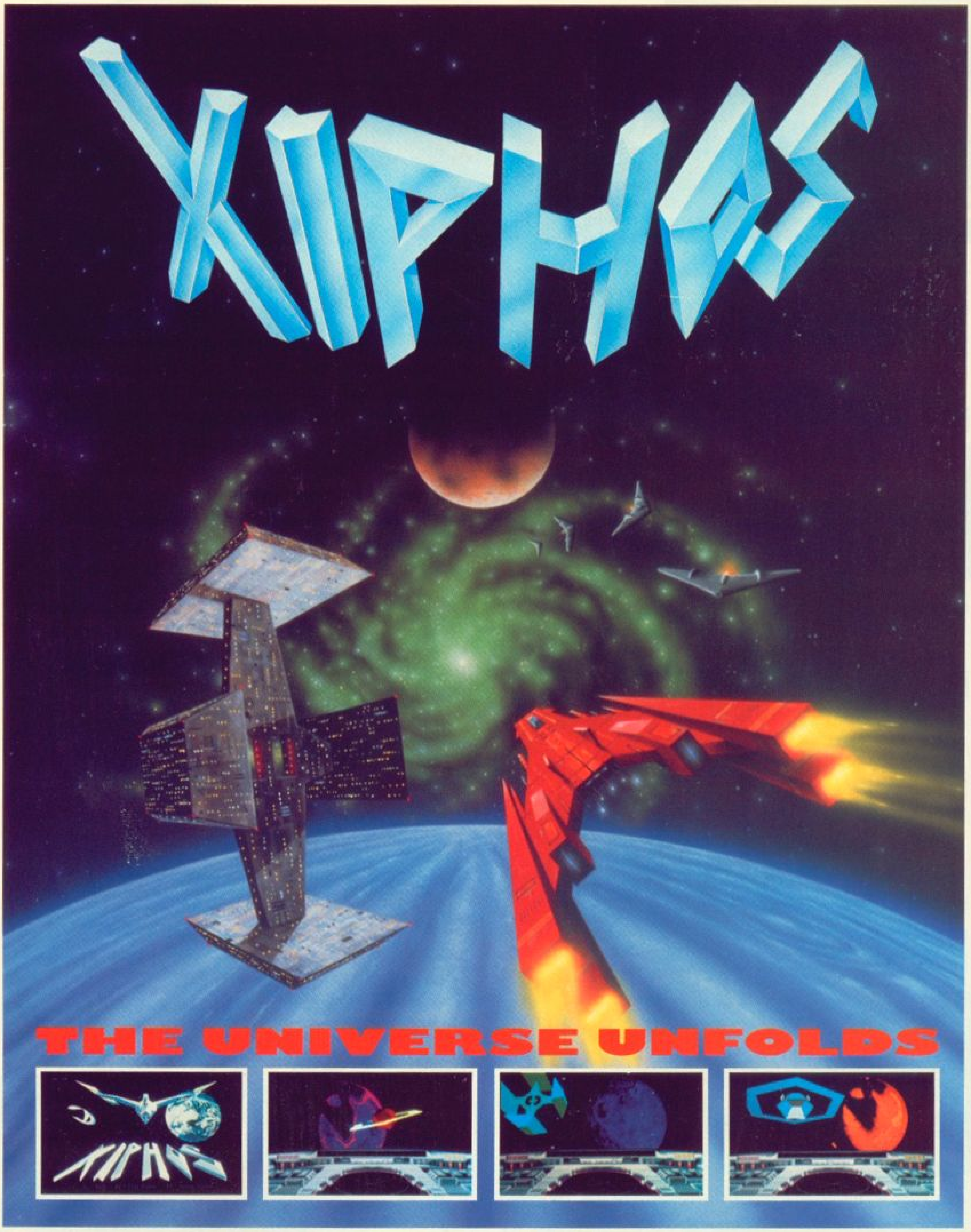
LOTUS ESPIRIT TURBO CHALLENGE

The Lotus Espirit Turbo accelerates from 0 to 60 mph in 4.7 seconds. "In April 1990, Gremlin and Lotus reached an agreement which gives Gremlin the exclusive world rights to use Lotus cars in home computer and console entertainment software. Two fundamental aims. The game must be better than any similar game available. The game must offer something new in the challenge it presents to the player or players." Inspired by the split sim-play of *Pitstop II*, *Lotus Espirit Turbo Challenge* will be burning rubber in the autumn on Amiga, ST, PC, Spectrum, C64 and CPC.



GREMLINS 2

Don't expose them to light. Don't get them wet. Don't feed them after midnight. Gremlins 2 – The New Batch movie grossed $2,507,143 in the first three days. Will the forthcoming computer game from Elite pack a similar performance?



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Role Playing Rumpus

All this RPG action, on the increase since the success of games like *Heroes of the Lance* and *Ultima*, has got one reader up in arms...

A LOAD OF BULL!

I am writing to complain in the strongest terms about the panel on page 84 of issue 34, entitled RPG-Rip Offs! It is really a load of bull, to be quite frank. Any computer game which says RPG on the cover is misleading the customre. This is simply because a computer role playing game is not possible!

A role playing game is just that: you play roles. It is very like acting. It is not a product of the number of characters present, or a product of the number of characteristics that these characters have. Role playing stems from the way characters behave in certain situations, the way they speak to others, their personal idiosyncrasies. It is quite possible to have four characters with exactly the same characteristics, but which are all very different.

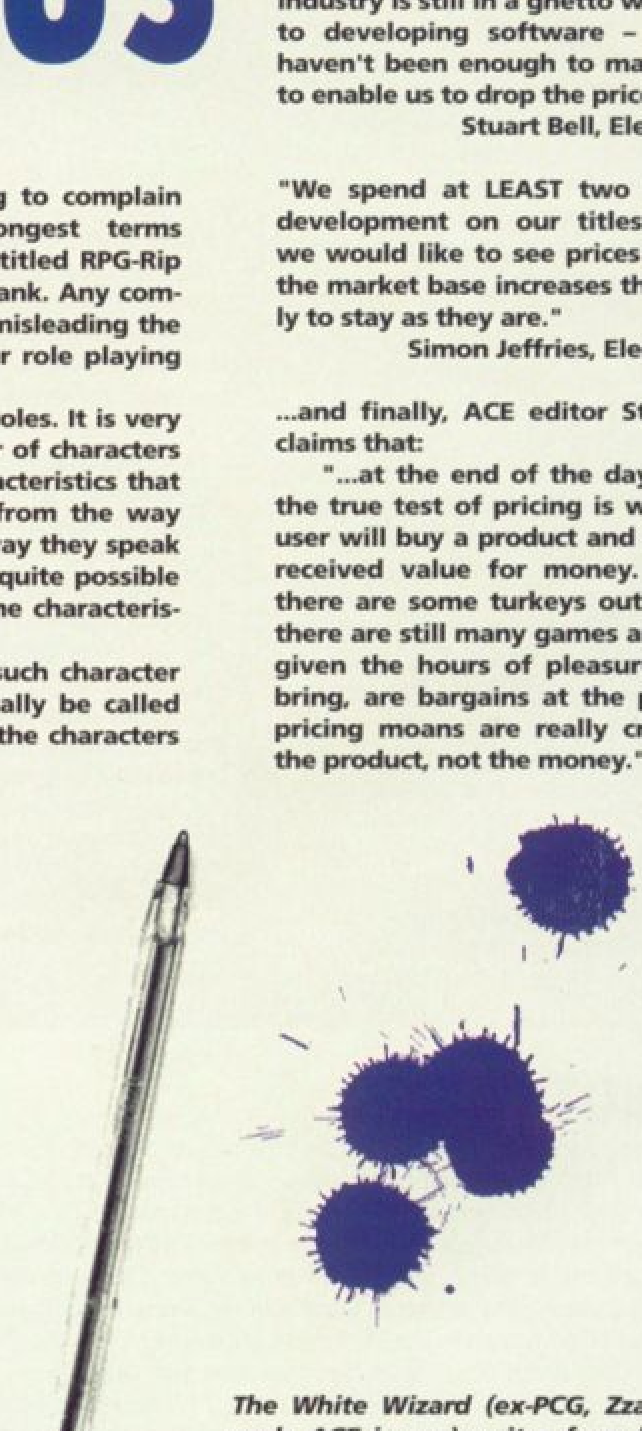
Computer RPG's simply cannot allow for such character development, and therefore they cannot really be called RPG's. You have to agree that, in a CRPG, if the characters have the same characteristics, they will behave in the same manner, and this is simply not so in a real RPG.

Finally, let me tear your RPG character apart, point by point.

1. The numbers of characters in a party has absolutely no effect on whether or not the game is an RPG.
2. Even if each character had 57 attributes, the game would not be an RPG.
3. Remember *Doomdark's Revenge* on the Spectrum? Each 'character' in that game had well over 4 attributes, all of which had a noticeable effect on the game. Would you call this an RPG?
4. All games should have SAVE options!
5. I once had a pair of identical twins in an AD&D game. One was a lawful good priest dedicated to healing all ills, the other was an evil assassin dedicated to eliminating all life on Krynn.
6. In a true RPG there would be an infinite number of character classes, as characters are free to do whatever they like.

Don't get me wrong. If all programmers stuck to your charter then it would be a wonderful world to play games in! However, not a single one of these wonderful computer games would be an RPG, not even the most powerful CRAY supercomputer could replace the Dungeon Master!!

Tony Park, Tottington



The White Wizard (ex-PCG, Zzap 64, and early ACE issues) writes from his cave in the Shetland Isles that '...the conflict between computer 'role-players' and table top RPG'ers will never cease. In the final analysis, no, you can never have a true role-playing game on a computer. But so-called computer RPG's have developed a life of their own and game designers like Richard (Ultima) Garriott and Interplay (Bards Tale) deserve credit for this. The RPG Charter seems a reasonable set of statements to me – as you seem to imply yourself in your final para – but only if it is applied to computer role playing games – which is exactly what was intended.

WE'RE WAITING!

Daniel Mather thinks *Wumpus Hunt* will be the top game of the future, along with *Whacky Waiters* and *Scott Adams* adventures. He's just one of the people who gave us a good laugh (and sometimes a good cry) with their letters this month. Next issue we will be running three pages of letters and we're dying to hear from you. Flashy types can fax us on 071 490 1094 and the snail delivers the mail to ACE Letters, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU – and every month we give £25 of free software to the sender of the ACE Prize Letter.

IT'S A BARGAIN?

Last month we published some correspondence from readers who were complaining about the cost of software. We asked software houses to reply but in the rush to go to press most spokesmen were 'unavailable'. Electronic Zoo and Electronic Arts both put their heads on the block, however...

"We'd love to see prices reduced, but until piracy stops it won't happen. The industry is still in a ghetto whe it comes to developing software – there just haven't been enough to machines sold to enable us to drop the price."

Stuart Bell, Electronic Zoo

"We spend at LEAST two man years development on our titles. Although we would like to see prices drop, until the market base increases they are likely to stay as they are."

Simon Jeffries, Electronic Arts

...and finally, ACE editor Steve Cooke claims that:

"...at the end of the day, however, the true test of pricing is whether the user will buy a product and feel he has received value for money. Of course there are some turkeys out there, but there are still many games around that, given the hours of pleasure they can bring, are bargains at the price. Most pricing moans are really criticisms of the product, not the money."

FUTURE SHOCKS

PRIZE LETTER
PRIZE LETTER

I am writing to you from the far distant future to aid you in your quest to find out what the fates have in store for computer gaming.

Here in my time, one all-pervasive force has a stranglehold over the entire computer community, leaving all other computer systems out in the cold. The brilliant Amiga C8000 with stunning mind-graphics and twin read/write CD drives doesn't even get a look in. Even the Atari STFM-E-FMV-TOS Enhanced 4096+ with twin 32-bit processors and dedicated 68000 graphics processor is left for dead.

In fact, the only computers that are permitted by the Emperor Ibern Bert Miles (known as IBM) are the IBM range, the latest of which is the IBM PS/5 80986. No other computers are allowed!

Actually, this isn't too bad, since the graphics standard on the new model is SE-EVGA Professional, with a resolution of 2560*2048 in more colours than the eye can discern. The PS/5 also has a 96 bit processor running at 109 MIPS. This PC costs 7590 IBMdollars, which is pretty much the same as 500 of your time's one pound floppies.

Admittedly, excluding all competition by death threats is not a nice way to carry on, but IBM is backed by the Emperor so that can get away with it.

As for software, there is a slight deficiency here – only one game is allowed, but luckily it is an amalgamation of virtually all game styles – incredibly interesting, deep, and great fun too. The name of the game? Elite 20.

The object of the game is to become Elite and fly your ship (preferably in the PS/5's hydraulic cabinet) watching the unbelievable 3D graphics – 95000506 polygons are used for the torpedoes alone. Once you have attained Elite status you become real life Prime Minister of Earth colony 06 (planet Earth to you), but as yet there are colossal efforts by people to replace the Prime Minister (Mrs Thatcher) every day.

So there you have it. The future of the games industry is Elite 2 on the PC. An utterly amazing game with incredible graphics and blinding depths of gameplay. However there is one major downfall of the program, a small flaw with the computer design that causes a great loss to the gamesplaying experience...It's like this: when IBM designed the first 8088PC they did not envisage it as a games machine, and only provided a pathetic sound chip and tinny speaker.

Since then, IBM have not bothered to upgrade the PC sound, so whenever you let off a huge 95000506 polygon torpedo glistening into the moody starlight with it's awesome exhaust trail...

...you get a little beep to show it has launched. And another if it destroys the enemy. And when you converse with an alien...Well...er...

David Stafford, Citizen No 06-16028086

Some things never change: PC sound, Mac prices, and Spectrum graphics...

F-29 RETALIATION

After recently purchasing AMOS and not so recently F-29 Retaliator for the Amiga, I thought that something had to be said about the quality of products arriving on the market.

Don't get me wrong. F-29 does contain some of the best vector graphics and sound yet to be beaten, but the sheer number of bugs that were so blatantly obvious after playing for several hours put me off the game totally. Since then I have played the game very little as I feel that the bugs ruin the game to such an extent as to make it unplayable. For instance, the multi-function display unit contains an artificial horizon that is at the best of times incomprehensible. Also, while flying past a piece of scenery, it is possible to crash into it yet you are not actually touching it.

This seemingly bug-ridden game cost me £25 and after playing it I came to the conclusion that either the playtesters were blind or that the product hadn't been playtested at all.

Now onto Mandarin's AMOS. After reading several reviews of this new BASIC language, I decided to buy it which incidentally cost me £50.

AMOS had been presented with an excellent manual and an even better editor. Several hours later the computer crashed again for the seventh time, so I decided enough was enough for that day and switched the computer off.

No more than a week later I had discovered that more than several commands documented in the manual did not actually exist which to me seems unbelievable. Admittedly there are over 500 commands, it says, but to me this does not justify the amount of checking that had not gone into the product costing £50, which is such a shame because AMOS is an excellent product.

My message to all software houses is that unless their products are checked more thoroughly they cannot really moan when people prefer playing safe and copying software than buying software with the chance that it is bug-ridden.

Lastly, on a somewhat lighter note, just as important. Do you still sell the ACE Binder as I have all 35 issues but have no binder to put the last 11 issues in.

Stephen Williams, Reading.

ACE was the only magazine to specifically mention the bugs in F29 when we reviewed it. We were assured at the time by Ocean that bug-ridden versions would be withdrawn. In our opinion (and we're not lawyers, remember), if bugs make a game unplayable then it is not fit for the purpose for which it was sold and you should be entitled to a refund from the dealer. Perhaps you might like to check with your local Consumer Advice Centre for guidance.

GAMEBOY GLORY

I've got this little gadget called the Gameboy. It's graphics are laughable and the sound is just better than the Spectrum's. But when it comes to playability it knocks out my (expensive) ST! Why is it that most 16-bit computer games are rubbish compared to console games? I think that there is something substantially wrong with the UK programmer's view of writing/converting a game. Why not get in touch with the Japanese programmers and swap some tips etc? (The PC Engine's Chase HQ beats the ST and Amiga versions hands down. Is the hardware used comparable?)

Could you please review some GAMEBOY games? I've seen that there are lots of new games coming out like Batman, Double Dragon, Nemesis, NFL Football etc.

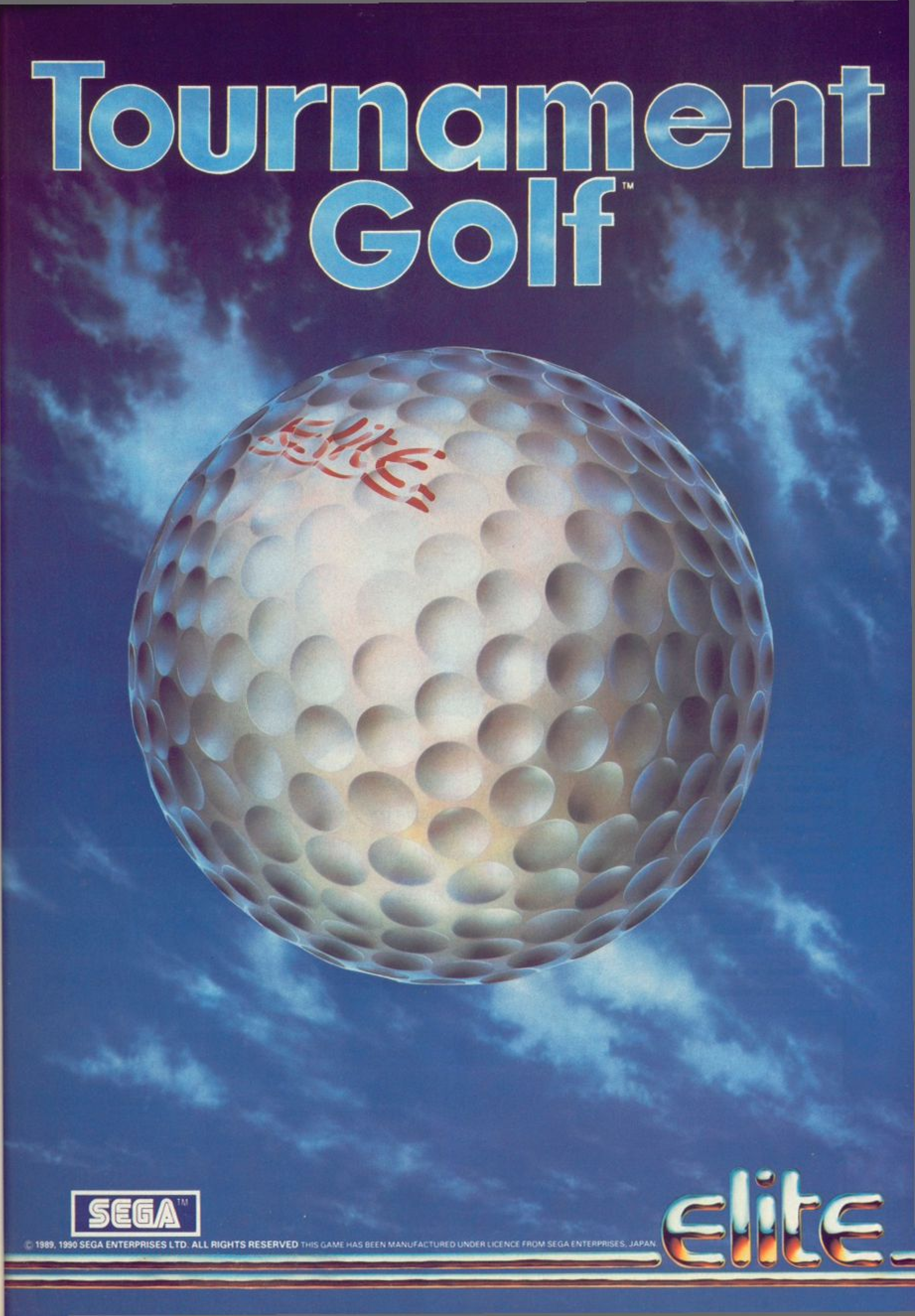
Jay Lee. The Netherlands.

Firstly, to say that "most 16-bit computer games are rubbish compared to console games" must either mean that you continually play/buy all the wrong 16-bit software, or that the titles you considered unworthy in the past have soured your view somewhat. In addition to which, you don't say which type of game you find better on the console. All of them? If so, you must surely realise what a generalised, inaccurate statement this is.

However, we agree with you about the general high standard of Gameboy titles, and we're covering them more and more (see this issue's Console Screentest section).

P.S.

Don't forget – we give a prize every month to the sender of the letter that occupies the Prize Letter slot on these pages. Every Prize Letter scribbler gets a software prize worth up to £25 for his or her machine, so get that pen out now and address the world...


Tournament
Golf™
elite
SEGA™
elite

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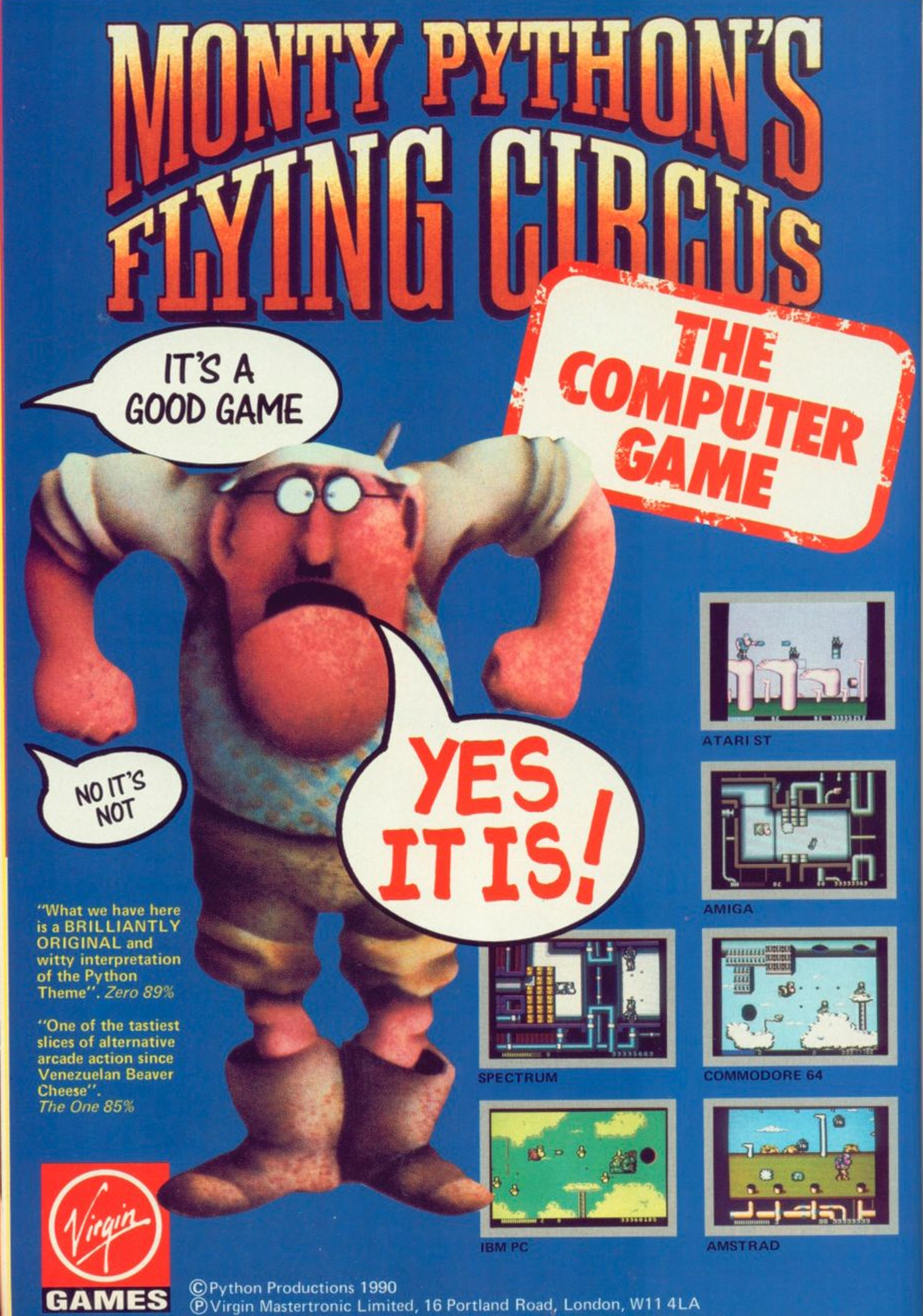
MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS
THE COMPUTER GAME
IT'S A GOOD GAME
NO IT'S NOT
YES IT IS!
ATARI ST
AMIGA
SPECTRUM
COMMODORE 64
IBM PC
AMSTRAD
Virgin GAMES

"What we have here is a BRILLIANTLY ORIGINAL and witty interpretation of the Python Theme". *Zero 89%*

"One of the tastiest slices of alternative arcade action since Venezuelan Beaver Cheese". *The One 85%*

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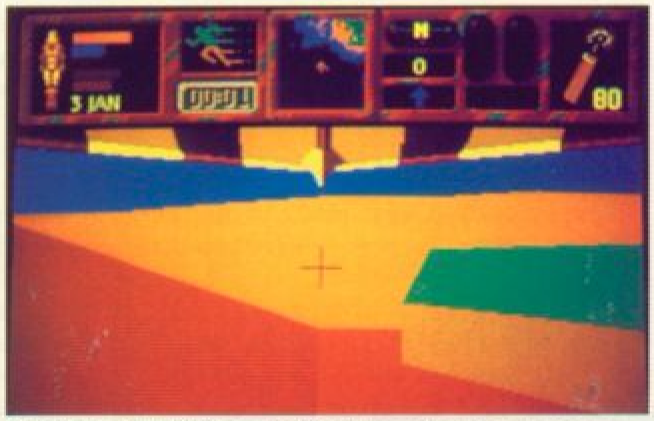
MIKE and the MECHANICS



An early shot of WILDFIRE in action. Don't worry about the strange colour of the control panel. The 3D graphics are enhanced versions of those found in Midwinter.

What is Mike Singleton, veteren games creator of *Midwinter* and *Lords of Midnight*, working on now? Rik Haynes exclusively previews WILDFIRE, the follow-up to *Midwinter*, and STARLORD...

Wildfire, the follow-up to *Midwinter*, is one of the most ambitious projects in the history of strategy action games. If you thought *Lords of Midnight* and *Midwinter* were big, wait till you map *Wildfire's* 120Mb of fractal landscapes.

"There are approximately 40-50 missions in *Wildfire*, each has the scope of *Midwinter*," confirms Mike Singleton – director of Maelstrom Games and veteran games creator.

Wildfire plays in a similar way to *Midwinter* – only Maelstrom has tweaked its gameplay to the boundaries of recognition. Singleton took note of gameplayers praise and criticism of *Midwinter*, "We're trying to make *Wildfire* like an action movie, with you taking the role of a James Bond/Indiana Jones style character. We'll mimic this within a solid graphics environment. With *Wildfire*, you can choose a short mission, lasting 1-2 hours, for a quick blast. But if you want, the strategy elements link-up together to create a campaign style of game."

GO WILD IN THE COUNTRY

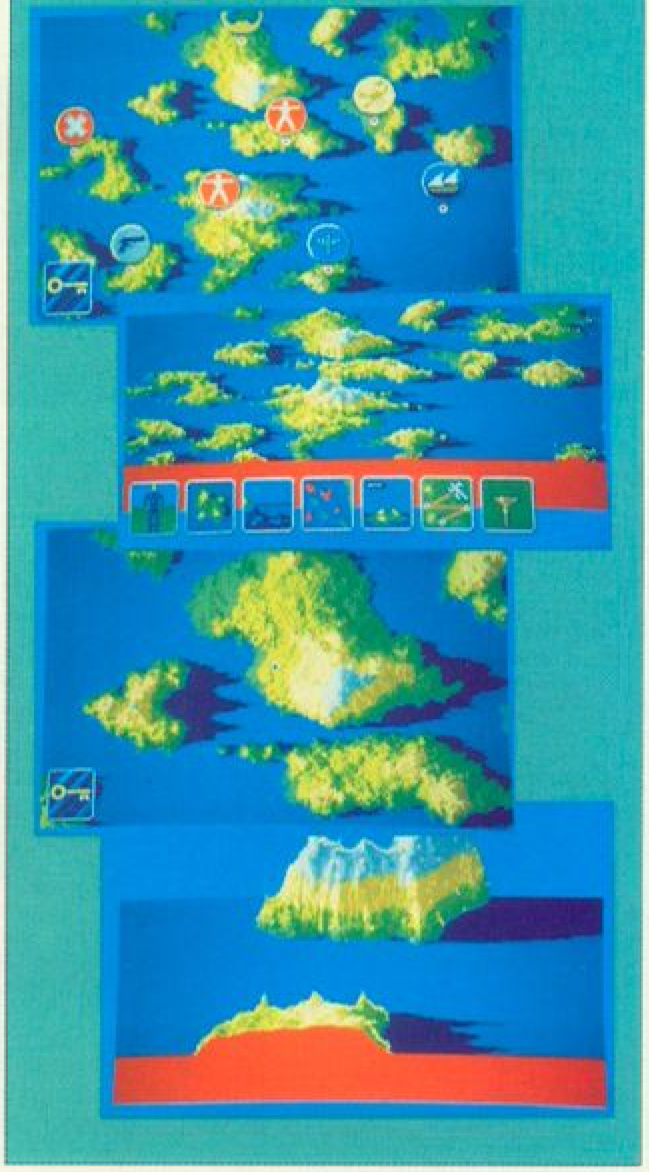
The story so far... After the thaw of Midwinter Island, the population have moved south to what were once the Cape Verde islands, off the West coast of Africa. Already known as the Slave Isles, these archipelagos are under the control of the powerful Saharan Empire. Once established in their new home, the Midwinter's form a new state, the Atlantic Federation. War with the Saharan Empire is inevitable. Playing a secret agent, you're on a covert mission to recruit more Slave Isles to the fledgling Federation. You'll have to fight for your freedom, but at least you get six months grace before the Saharan Armada sets off to kick your rebel butt.

Wildfire can be played on three different levels: Training, Solo Mission (a single mission on an enemy held island) and Campaign Game (a variety of

THE WILDFIRE BUNCH: [back row] Bruce Butterfield (Generally Assisting), George Williamson (Programmer), Mike Singleton (Project Leader, Game Design, Maths R&D), Hugh Battenbury (Business Brains), Andy Elkerton (Graphics Designer), Mandy Parker (Research and Preparation of Wildfire Text), [front row] Dave 'Dav' Gautery (Programmer), Val Franco (Programmer), Dave 'Ollie' Ollman (Senior Programmer).

ISLANDS IN THE SUN

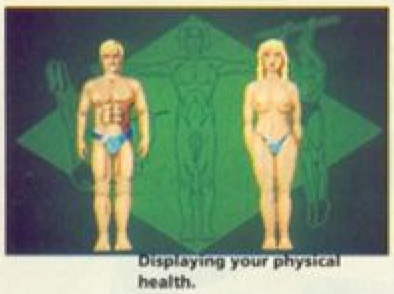
Maelstrom uses fractal graphics to generate the Slave Isles in *Wildfire*. There are 40-50 major islands in the group, each with their own individual political, administrative and cultural identity. Using icons, you can select a flat map, isometric side-view, sea-bed or political map of the area. Covering some 600 miles, the Slave Isles are based on the Cape Verde islands off the West coast of Africa.



missions on different islands. Each mission effectively self-contained. Once these missions have been mastered, you fight a running battle with the Saharan Armada as it heads for the Federation home base.

YOUR MISSION SHOULD YOU ACCEPT IT...

There are 40-50 major islands in *Wildfire*. Every one has its own political, administrative and cultural perspective. Each contains a particular mission. During the game you could: sabotage a power station, smuggle arms to the resistance, assassinate an island's chief of secret police, capture a TV station or hunt out and eliminate a traitor in the resistance. The missions can be very complex, detailed and filled with subplots. In the first example (sabotage a power station), you might have to steal explosives from a local army base, find the engineer who designed the power station, free his daughter from jail to persuade him to hand over the plans, hijack an army truck to use as a vehicle, kill the sentry, plant the explosives and escape to safety.


Displaying your physical health.

Although you're pretty much on your own, you can find or recruit resistance fighters for information, shelter, food, clothing, weapons, ammunition, papers and transport. *Wildfire* will incorporate 20-25 forms of transport, including: biplanes, zeppelins, flying boats, rocket packs, jetskis, tanks, trains and rope slides.

Maelstrom has added 'Special Action Sequences' to make *Wildfire* more 'film-like'. "During the game you can enter buildings, lay dynamite, pick up weapons and switch vehicles without leaving the solid graphics environment," states Singleton.

I WANT TO BE A PEARL DIVER

Wildfire will feature thousands of individual human characters to interact with. Amazingly, each will have their own looks, personality and life history. Maelstom's custom-made character designer is an ingenious solution to the immense problem of creating the huge amounts of data required by every character in *Wildfire*. Split into several editors, the character designer is used to create individual portraits, personalities and life-stories.

With the face creator you choose the hair style and colour, nose, mouth, eyes, ears, skin tone, etc and lay them out on a blank face according to taste. "Hopefully the faces will be polygon generated – allowing them to be animated and show expression," says Singleton.

Each characters complex background 'story' can be generated in a matter of minutes. With the sentence constructor, you're allowed to alter the type (0-31) and syntax (0-7) of up to five words in every sentence. For example: She had a happy childhood. The 'happy' could be changed to carefree, wild, idyllic, lazy, innocent, exciting, adventurous, contented, ordinary, humdrum, lonely, hard, stormy, unhappy, desolate, painful, harsh, etc. The 'a' is automatically changed to 'an' where appropriate. In this example, the 'she' and 'childhood' could also be substituted for other words.

LORDS OF LYNX
If the Lynx colour hand-held console does well, Maelstrom will probably convert *Lords of Midnight* over to it. "The Lynx is the perfect console for *Lords of Midnight* because of the sprite scaling," says Mike Singleton. So keep your fingers crossed!

Time to get personal. The character designer also specifies the characters sex (male or female – no aliens allowed at present), status (single, married, divorced, widowed), no. of children, age, title (rabbi, nurse, sergeant, bishop, mullah, etc), forename, surname, occupation, eagerness and treachery (0-100%). The *Wildfire* job market is wide and diverse, including occupations as: archeaolo-

FORMING A FRACTAL FANTASY

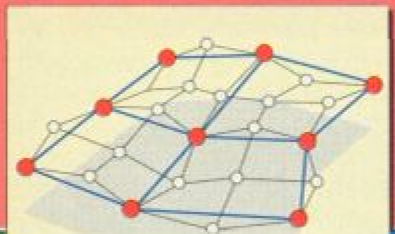
Any irregular shape, form or distribution retains its irregularity at any magnification. Fractal geometry, invented by Professor Benoit Mandlebrot, is used to "create shapes that are perfectly repeatable, controllable and have measurable properties which are at the same time indistinguishable, to a large extent, from the messiness of the world". In effect, fractal graphics can simulate artificial worlds which look natural and feel real. They've been used in military simulators, movies and Maelstrom's *Midwinter* and *Wildfire* computer games. Mike Singleton explains how:

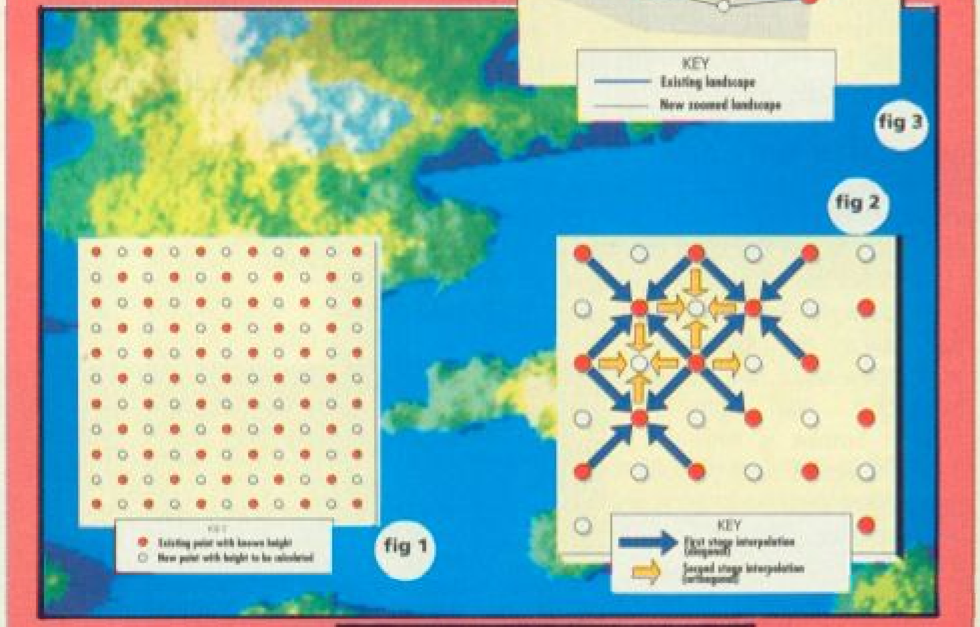
"Maelstrom's fractal landscape generator works on a square grid with each point in the grid given its own particular height above or below sea level. This is called the heightgrid. When the landscape is displayed in solid 3D, the graphics routines look at the heightgrid and interpret it as a three dimensional surface – displaying each square in the grid as two right-angled triangles. If we draw the square as a single surface, we get visual errors because with each of the four corner points having different heights. It's not flat. On the other hand, every triangle is, without fail, a flat surface."

"We start with a small, predefined grid of 80x50 control points, so we can manipulate the broad outlines of the landscape. Someone sits down and manually sets the heights of all three points using our landscape designer utility. This way, the rough shapes of islands, mountain ranges, etc can be deliberately chosen. The outline of the British Isles, for instance, could be mimicked quite realistically. Beyond this, however, random fractal techniques take over and fill in the detail of all the in-between points. As we zoom in further, more in-between points are fractally generated. By the time we'd zoomed in on our map of Britain to the level of the Isle of Wight, you'd notice that the rough outline is still faithful but some of the details are different to the real thing."

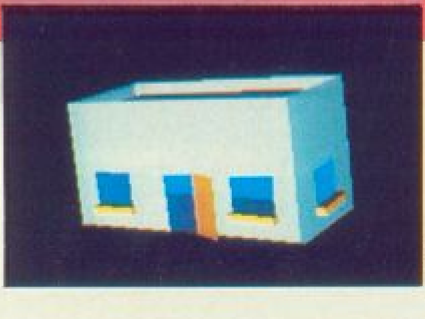
"At each level of zoom, we do a 2x2 magnification. This means generating three new in-between points for every existing point (see fig 1). To generate in-between points, we use a 4-way interpolation (see fig 2). To make a new point, we take the four nearest existing points and average their heights. We than add a small negative or positive displacement to the average height to increase or decrease the new height. The displacement is chosen pseudo-randomly. A pseudo-random number is one that looks random but can, in fact, be reproduced again and again providing you use the same seed number. We use the map coordinate of the new point as the seed number for the random displacement, so that each time we generate the same area of landscape, we get exactly the same design. The result is a new heightgrid (see fig 3) with four times as many points. All the in-between points differ slightly from the average height at that position, creating new bumps and dips each time you zoom in."

"To keep memory requirements to a minimum, we only store 4000 points in memory at any one time. To expand this to a full-screen map with each pixel having its own particular height, we do two unseen magnifications before writing to the screen, generating 60000 points each time round. In *Wildfire*, you can zoom in five times over. This is the equivalent to having a map made up of 65 million pixels and over 120Mb of data. Unless, Microprose is going to give away hard disks with its games in future, fractals are the only way to do it!'




KEY
Existing landscape
New zoomed landscape
fig 3
fig 2
KEY
Existing point with known height
New point with height to be calculated
fig 1
KEY
First stage interpolation (diagonal)
Second stage interpolation (orthogonal)

"I'd like to do a virtual reality version of Lords of Midnight."
Mike Singleton


One of the Arab-style buildings in WILDFIRE.

gist, acrobat, beggar, belly dancer, chat show host, chimney sweep, DJ, demolition expert, errand boy, engraver, faith healer, fire eater, grave digger, guru (Steve Cooke), hermit (Steve Cooke again), layabout (Rik Haynes), monk, pearl diver, pimp, ratcatcher, snake charmer and tatooist.

Susceptibility to persuasion is another character feature in the edit suite. A characters reactions to charm, sex appeal, bribery, threats, reason, pleading, authority and deception can each be set at poor, average, good or excellent. Each character can agree to help, be non-committal, refuse or refuse with violence.

So with this full character designer and cunning memory compression techniques, Maelstrom is creating up to 2000 individual characters in *Wildfire*, each with their very own history, personality and portrait. As Singleton points out, "One of the objectives with *Wildfire* is to get personalities in the game."

Wildfire is shaping up to be *the* megagame of 1990. The size and complexity of the game is incredible. I've only scratched the surface of the game in this preview. If Mike and his micro mechanics can deliver all that's promised, they have the makings of an ACE-Rated game. Look out for a full ACE review in the near future. I'll leave the final words to Mike Singleton, "We want to make *Wildfire* authentic, interesting, and above all, fun to play."

MIDWINTER SECRETS

You can fly the handglider into the cable-car station and land inside. This is the only building you can enter in the game. Be warned, it's very difficult to do! If you're very skillful, you can even fly-in through the door and fly-out through the window.

> *"Microprose have got it together... they push our products from the word go."*
>
> **Hugh Battenbury**

ONCE AN ENGLISH TEACHER

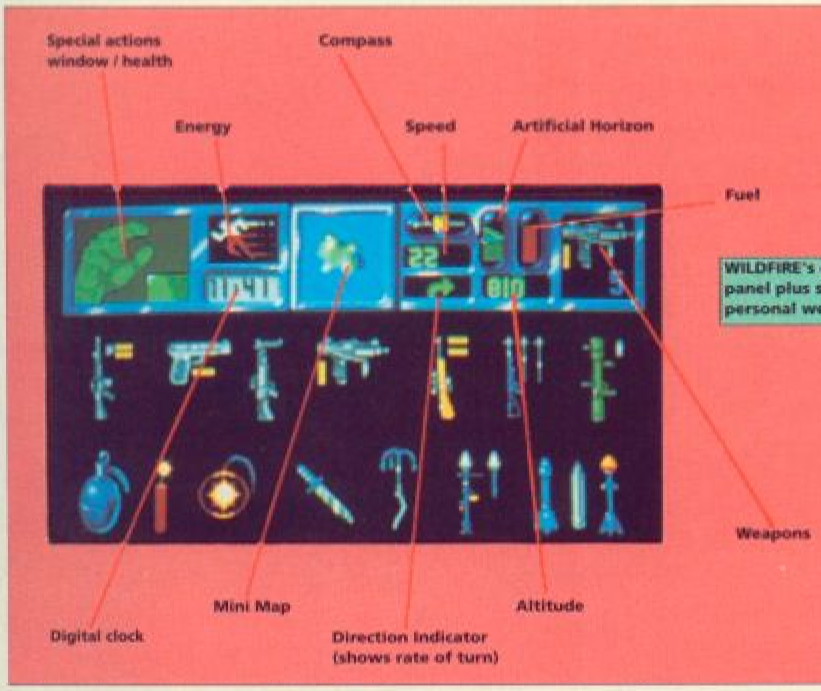
Mike Singleton began his coding career by programming a mainframe computer at Lancaster University back in 1968. "It was a good time to be a student," laughs Singleton. He studied theoretical physics for a year before deciding life would be more groovy as an English teacher. Singleton wrote his first game, *Space Ace* for the Commodore Pet in 1979. Other Pet games followed, but Singleton's first hit came with the ZX81. *Games Pack One*, a compilation of six 1K games, earned him £6000. Singleton's job as a teacher was over, his career as a full-time games creator had begun.

During 1982, Singleton wrote Vic-20 versions of *Snake Pit, Shadowfax and Siege*. He dabbled in cyberspace the following year, with *Three Deep Space*, a stereoscopic game for the Spectrum, C64, BBC and Vic-20. Perhaps Singleton's most widely-regarded game was released in 1984 by Beyond – which, at the time, was owned by EMAP (the company behind ACE). *Lords of Midnight*, an epic fantasy strategy adventure, was soon regarded a classic Spectrum game.

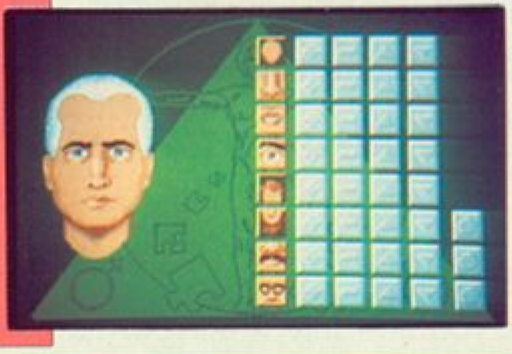
Over the next three years, Singleton developed *Doomdark's Revenge* (follow-up to *Lords of Midnight*), *Quake Minus One* (icon-driven strategy arcade game for the C64), *Star Trek* (started life as a multivision system demo on the Spectrum – Singleton just provided the games design), *Dark Septre* (Maelstrom's first game), *War in Middle Earth* (8-bit versions only) and Whirlygig (3D shoot'em-up with 4000 polygons per second – the polygons were turned into sprites for extra speed).

Singleton started a 'nice little sideline' in 1981. *Starlord* was a popular sci-fi play-by-mail-game which continued on till 1986. Maelstrom is now converting *Starlord* into a computer game, due for release sometime in 1991.

Maelstrom's first 16-bit megagame, the 948 ACE-Rated *Midwinter*, was released earlier this year (see ACE 32). *Wildfire*, the sequel to *Midwinter*, will be the next Maelstrom game – scheduled to be released in November by Microprose on the Rainbird label.



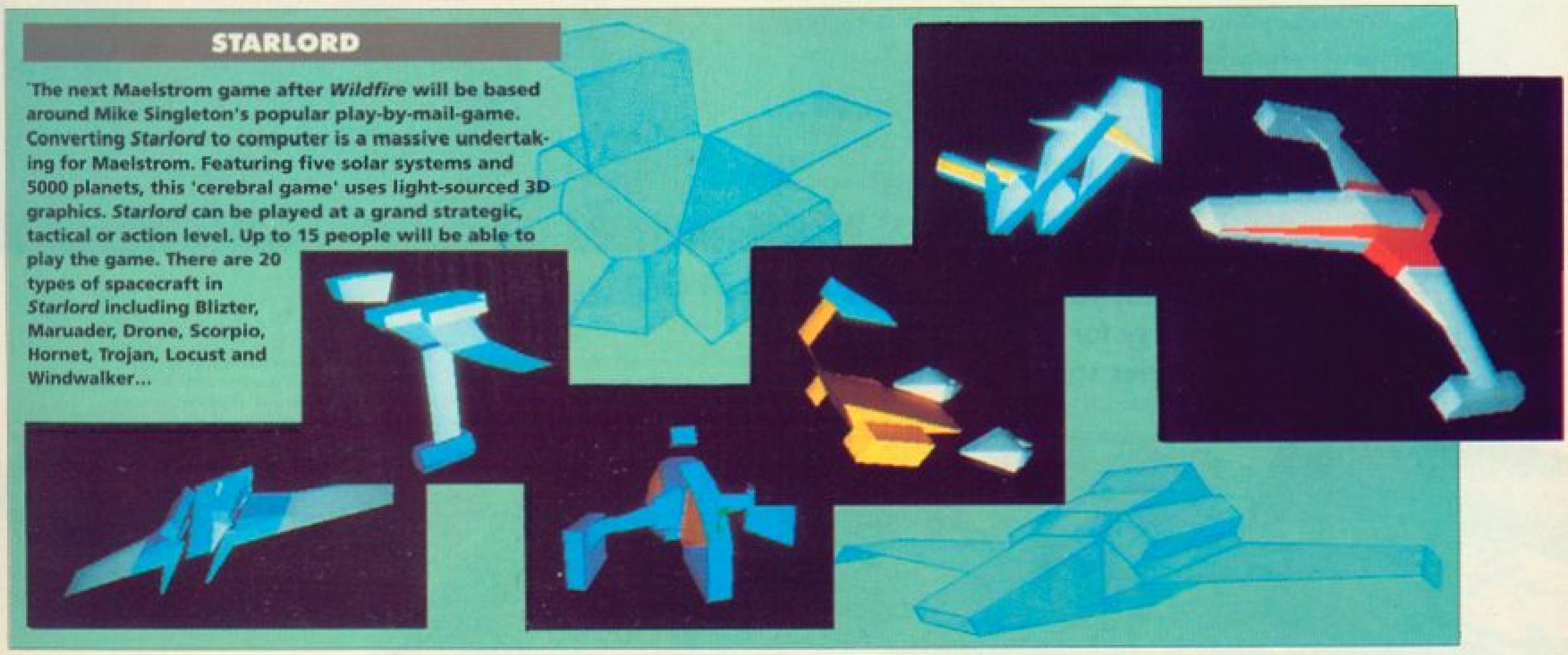
WILDFIRE's control panel plus selection of personal weaponry.



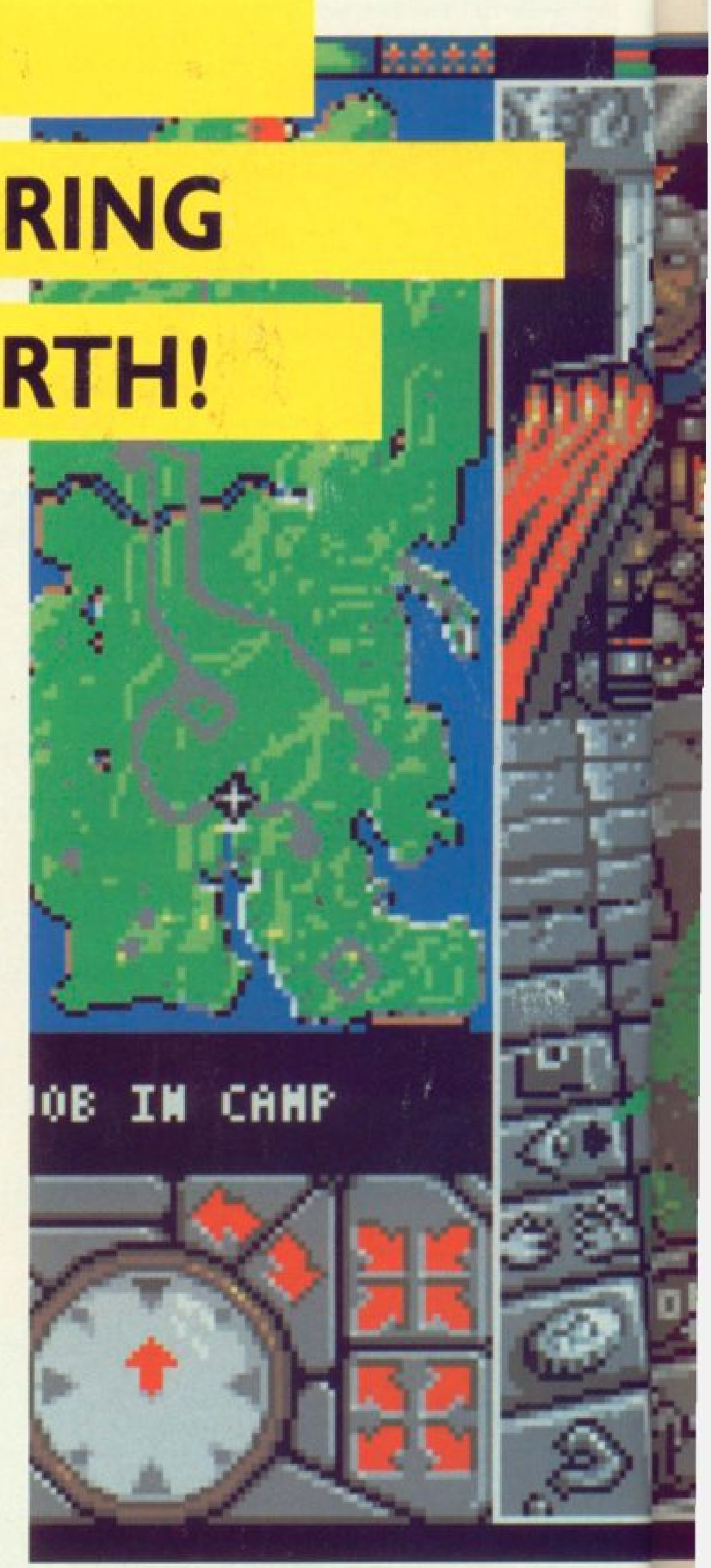
Face creating editor (see I Want to be a Pearl Diver body text). You'll be able to design your own character in the game using this system.

STARLORD

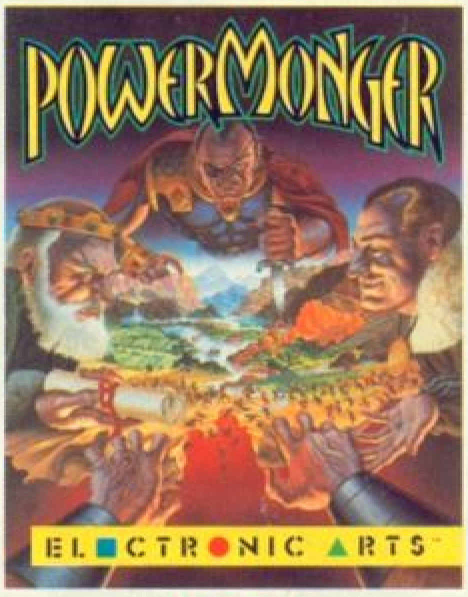
The next Maelstrom game after *Wildfire* will be based around Mike Singleton's popular play-by-mail-game. Converting *Starlord* to computer is a massive undertaking for Maelstrom. Featuring five solar systems and 5000 planets, this 'cerebral game' uses light-sourced 3D graphics. *Starlord* can be played at a grand strategic, tactical or action level. Up to 15 people will be able to play the game. There are 20 types of spacecraft in *Starlord* including Blizter, Maruader, Drone, Scorpio, Hornet, Trojan, Locust and Windwalker...



YOU OVERCAME THE GODS? THESE HANDSOME SPECIMENS WILL BRING YOU DOWN TO EARTH!



In Populous, you challenged the gods. Now man is your adversary in the form of three unscrupulous and violent tribal leaders.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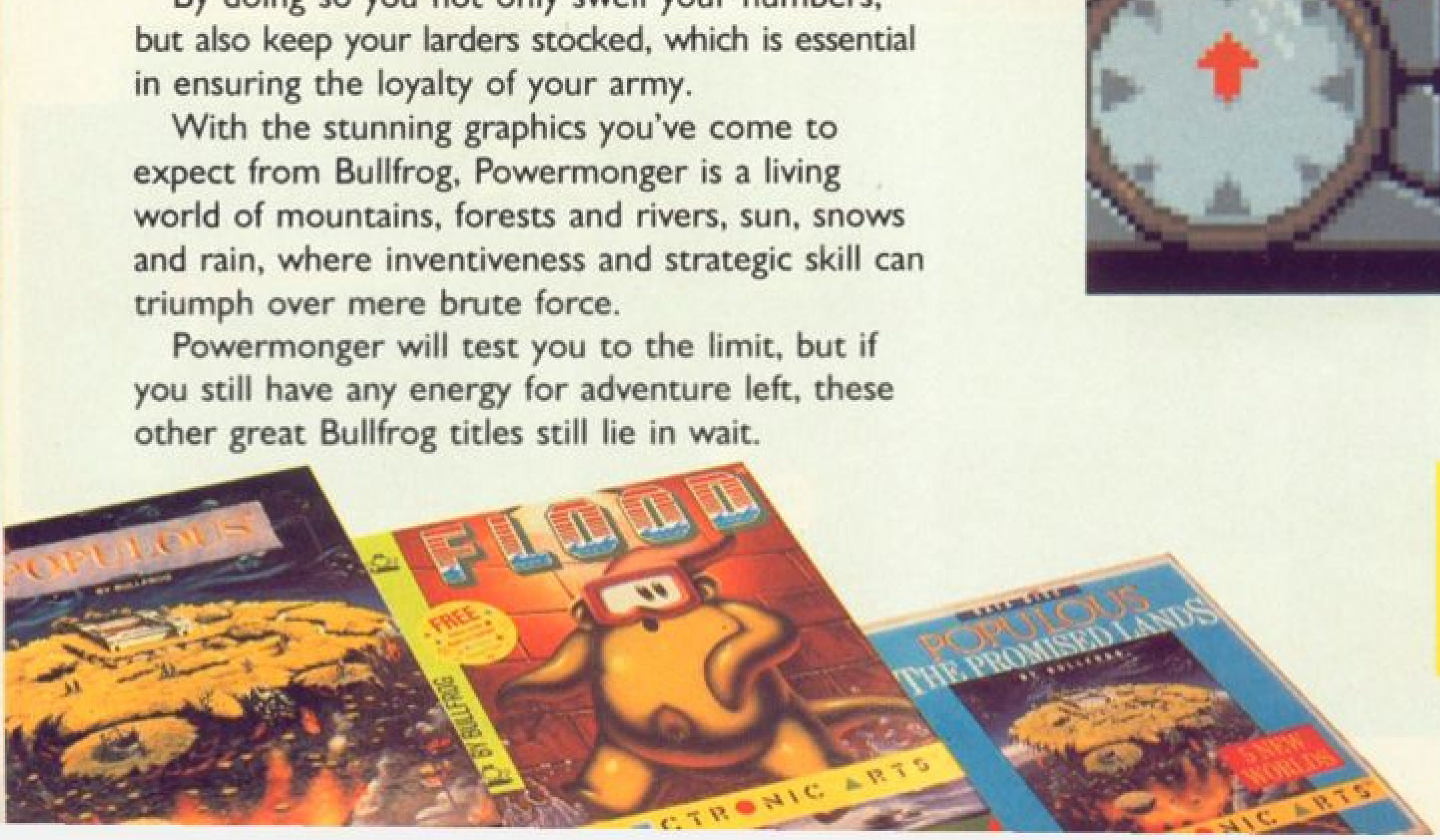
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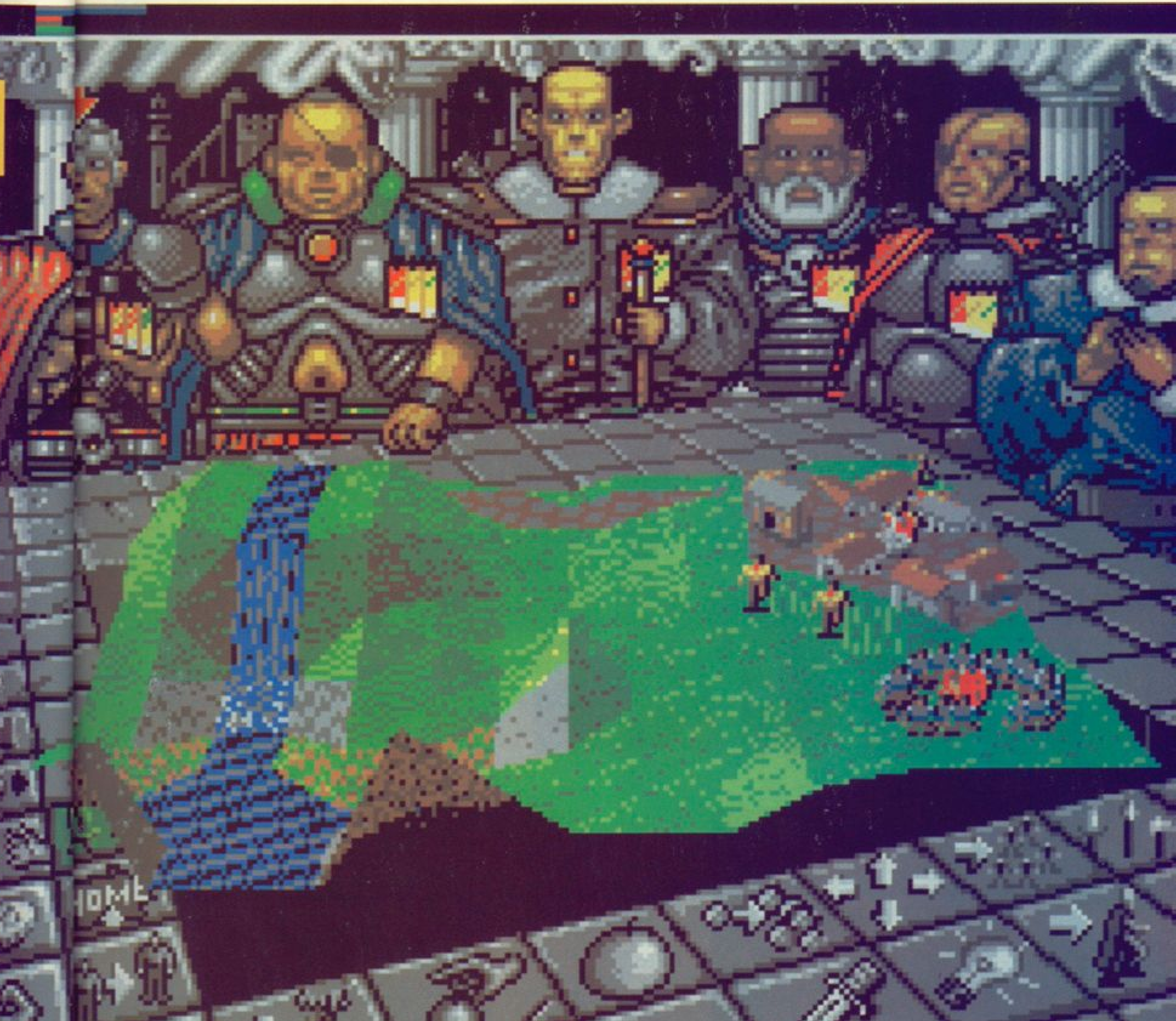

"Better than Populous", Peter Molyneux of Bullfrog, Creators of Populous.

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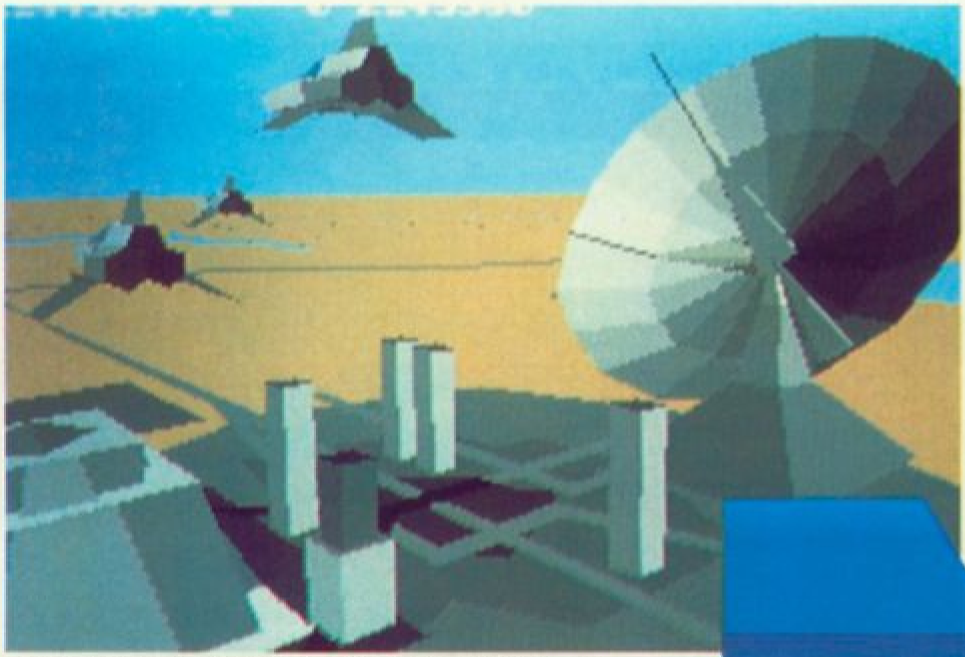
LET'S GET

Digital Image Design, the team behind *F-29 Retaliator*, is currently developing EPIC and RETALIATOR 2. Rik Haynes reports from Runcorn…

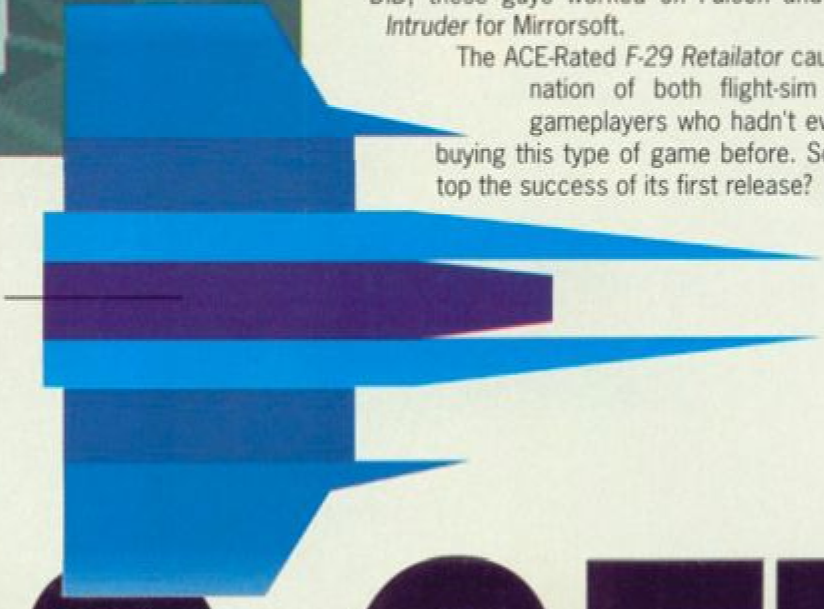
"We produced the flight-sim of the year… within a year," states Martin Kenwright of Digital Image Design – the software development team responsible for Ocean's highly successful *F-29 Retaliator* flight simulation.

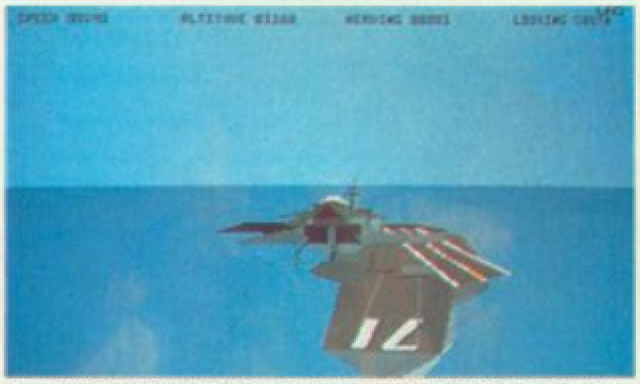
Started in March 1989, Runcorn-based DID consists of eight people: Martin Kenwright (Director, Designer), Phil Allsopp (Director, Amiga/ST Programmer), Russ Payne (Director, Amiga/ST Programmer), Andy Torkington (Amiga/ST Programmer), Paul Hollywood (3D Programmer, Graphic Artist), Rob Ball (Graphic Artist), Jason Brooke (PC Programmer) and Liddon Brooke (Graphic Artist). Before DID, these guys worked on *Falcon* and *Flight of the Intruder* for Mirrorsoft.

The ACE-Rated *F-29 Retailator* caught the imagination of both flight-sim fanatics and gameplayers who hadn't even thought of buying this type of game before. So how will DID top the success of its first release?



The custom-made world editor is one of DID's most powerful game creation tools. "We can build a world in 30 minutes," says Martin Kenwright. "The world editor loads in all the 3D shapes, ranging from runways to ray guns. It allows us to create complete game landscapes viewed from any angle. We can have massive scenarios with vehicles like tanks and space craft all doing their own thing. Creating a 3D world is now simplicity itself." Together, these four editors account for 10Mb of source code. This screenshot shows the fighters and buildings from Epic, using the colour-scheme from Retaliator. Note the large size of the radar-like gun dish, DID are designing gigantic complexes and craft for use in Epic. All these objects will be to scale when you play the game! The ion cannon is part of the defense network which protects then home solar system of your enemy.





"Hopefully RETALIATOR 2 will be more interactive," says Phil Allsopp. The successor will feature the new F-22B carrier-based fighter, MiG Ferret stealth-fighter, AH-64 Apache and Hind-D helicopter gunships, A-10 Thunderbolt, SU-27 Soviet jet, and all the original aircraft from the first game.

POLYGON POWER

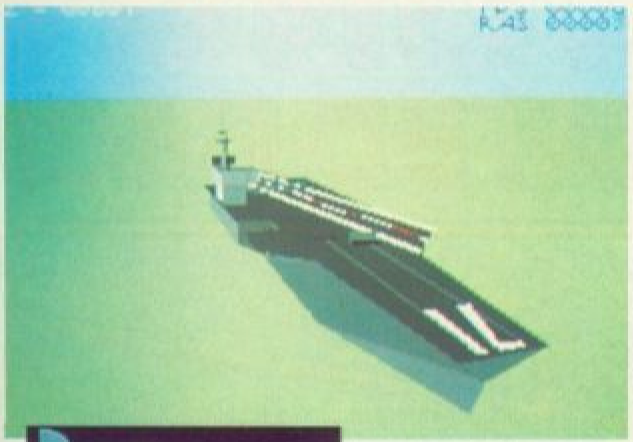
DID has been working on some revolutionary 3D graphics routines and editors since completing *F-29 Retaliator*. The new ultrafast graphics engine forms the core of *Epic* and *Retaliator 2* – with polygon discs, cones, spheres, true ellipses, standard shapes (lines, triangles, squares and rectangles), thousands of objects (up to 256x16 3D movements, rotations and turns), 13 scales of grey, a see-through hash palette with a maximum of 64 colours made out of 16, and different ranges of density for clouds, force-fields, etc.

DIGITAL FUTURES

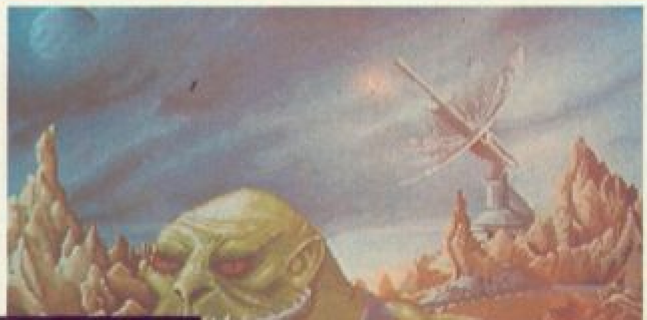
DID is looking to tomorrow. It is already developing state-of-the-art software technologies for use in Compact Disc systems. "CD games will take longer to develop – around 1-2 years per project. We will have more people in our development team, with twice as many graphic artists than programmers. The whole design of a CD game is storyboarded similar to a movie because of the massive structure of the program. In effect, CD games will become interactive movies. In five years, there will be increased liaison between film companies and studios, musicians and software developers. Imagine a computer game with a movie licence tie-in, using original or specially adapted movie footage," predicts Martin Kenwright.

"Piracy will become almost non-existent, and software will appeal to a far wider scope of people. With no keyboard required, even Granny will have a go! Unfortunately, programmers and artists will get carried away with this mass of memory and forget about gameplay."

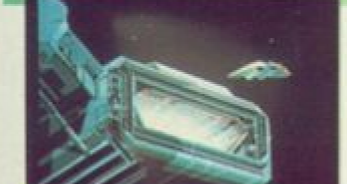
Are you interested in the future of games technology? DID is looking for talented programmers, artists and musicians. Just fax Martin Kenwright on 0928 579975.



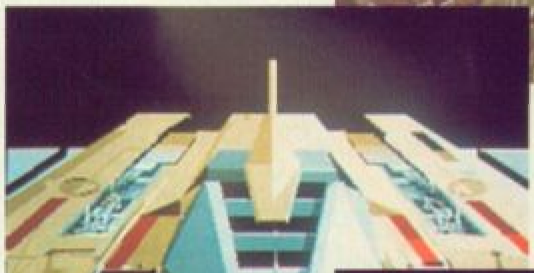
◀ An aircraft carrier in the middle of a field, what's going on? RETALIATOR 2 contains two American carriers: Roosevelt and JF Kennedy. It also has Russian Delta Class submarines and the US Ohio sub fitted with Trident II missiles.



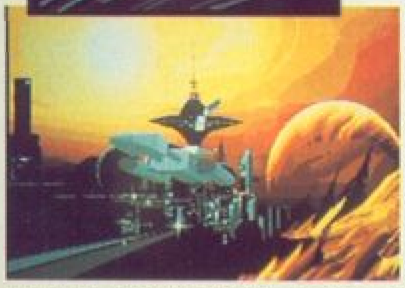
▲ *EPIC was originally going to be Goldrunner 3D* – until Microdeal decided to pull out of the games industry! DID bought the game back, sold it to Ocean, and renamed it Epic.



◀ DID is trying emulate an arcade game with EPIC, each game should last 30 minutes.

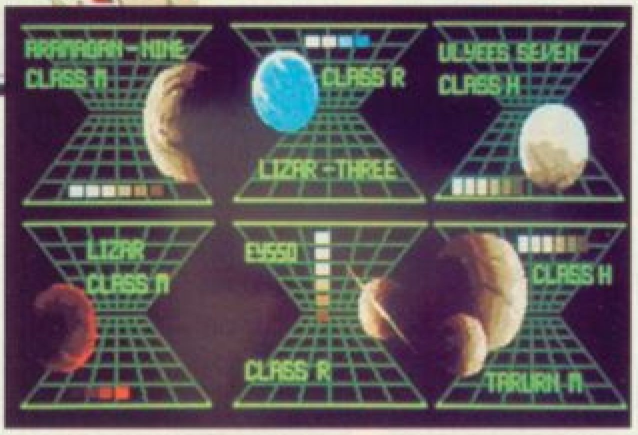


▲ A craft close-up in EPIC. Your ship is armed with a 50000 Megaton cobalt salted device, ion steam heavy assault gun, photon beam and laser waves.



Part of EPIC's intro sequence. DID's new graphics system incorporates a bitmap 3D/vector map system with animated polygons, sprites and bitmap graphics. Built-in algorithms sort out the correct polygon order and three dimensional collision detection. You can also have digitised audio – all doing their thang at the same time. "Origin's Wingleader (see ACE 35) is the closest thing we've seen to our system," says Martin Kenwright.

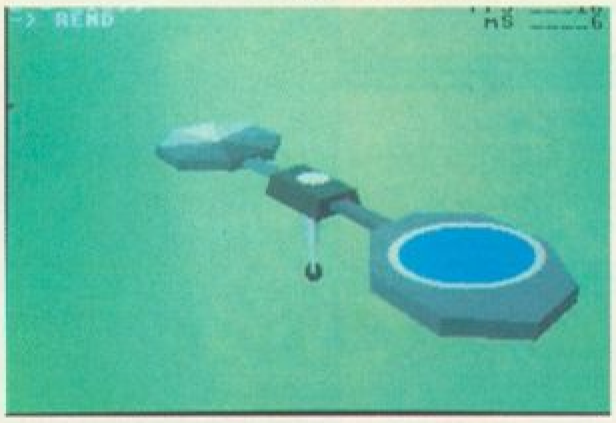
> *"We can build a world in 30 minutes."*
>
> **Martin Kenwright**



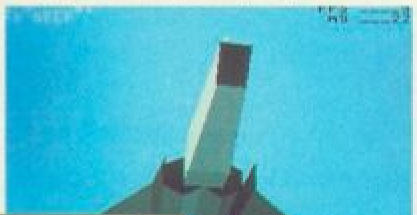
Some planet data for your EPIC spacecraft cockpit. Each planet with have its own atmospheric conditions like heavy storms and strong gravity pull.

DIGITAL

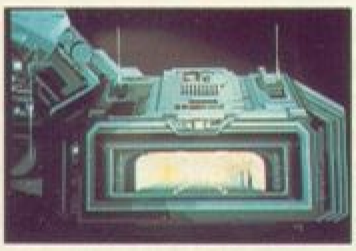
This 17 frames per second agriculture ship from EPIC has 86 polygons, including eight discs. You have to defend these 'aggro' ships during the game, in real-life they would be two miles long.



Many of the spacecraft from EPIC have been 'inspired' by sci-fi movies, including this Viper fighter from Battlestar Galactica. Remember Starbuck and Apollo used to fly this baby! Epic also has Cylon fighters, the Battlestar itself and X-Wing fighters from Star Wars. These spaceships will be 'tweaked' in the final version to avoid any copyright problems.



Three DID'ers: Martin Kenwright (left), Phil Allsopp and Andy Torkington. Kenwright was recently pulled-over for doing 145mph in his RS Turbo. He responded by purchasing a dashboard radar-detector – we wonder when he'll fit Beyond Visual Range missiles!



Flying your EPIC spacecraft into the carrier ship. DID is trying to include a manual landing facility.

> *"The bugs in the first version of Retaliator were annoying, but people wanted it in any state."*
>
> **Martin Kenwright**

RETALIATOR RETURNS

"*Retaliator 2* is a totally new concept with faster 3D graphics routines. It's going to be better in every way to F-29," says Martin Kenwright. "You control a kick ass squadron of US superfighters, ready to be assigned to any hotspot around the world. The polygon graphics generators have been completely overhauled and now include ellipses and improved clipping. The level editor allows us to create complex scenarios with primary and secondary missions. We also want to incorporate a head-to-head option. *Retaliator 2* has taken a back seat to *Epic*, but should by finished in the first quarter of 1991."

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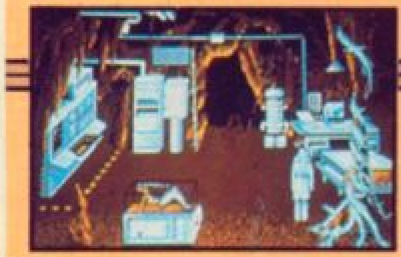

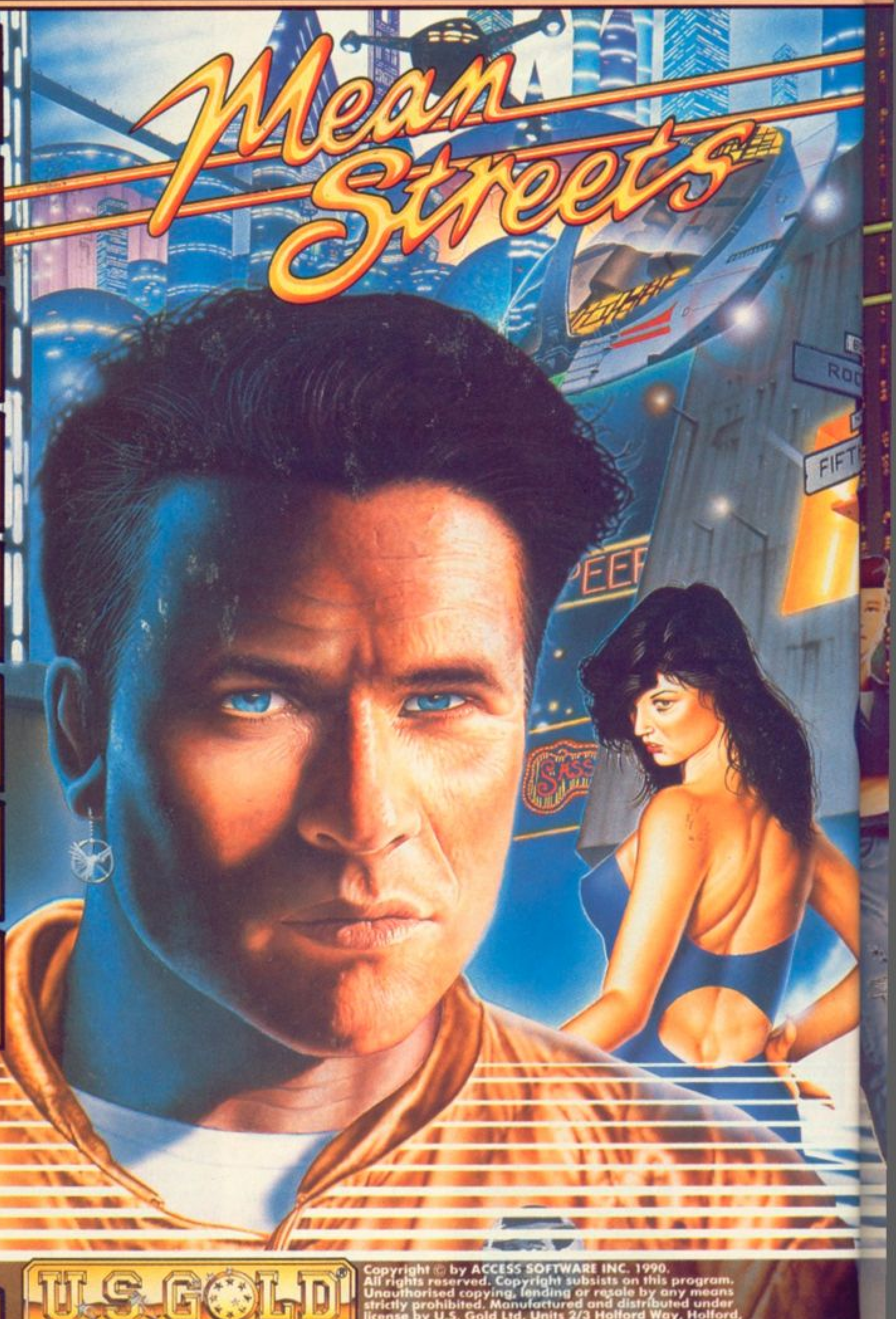

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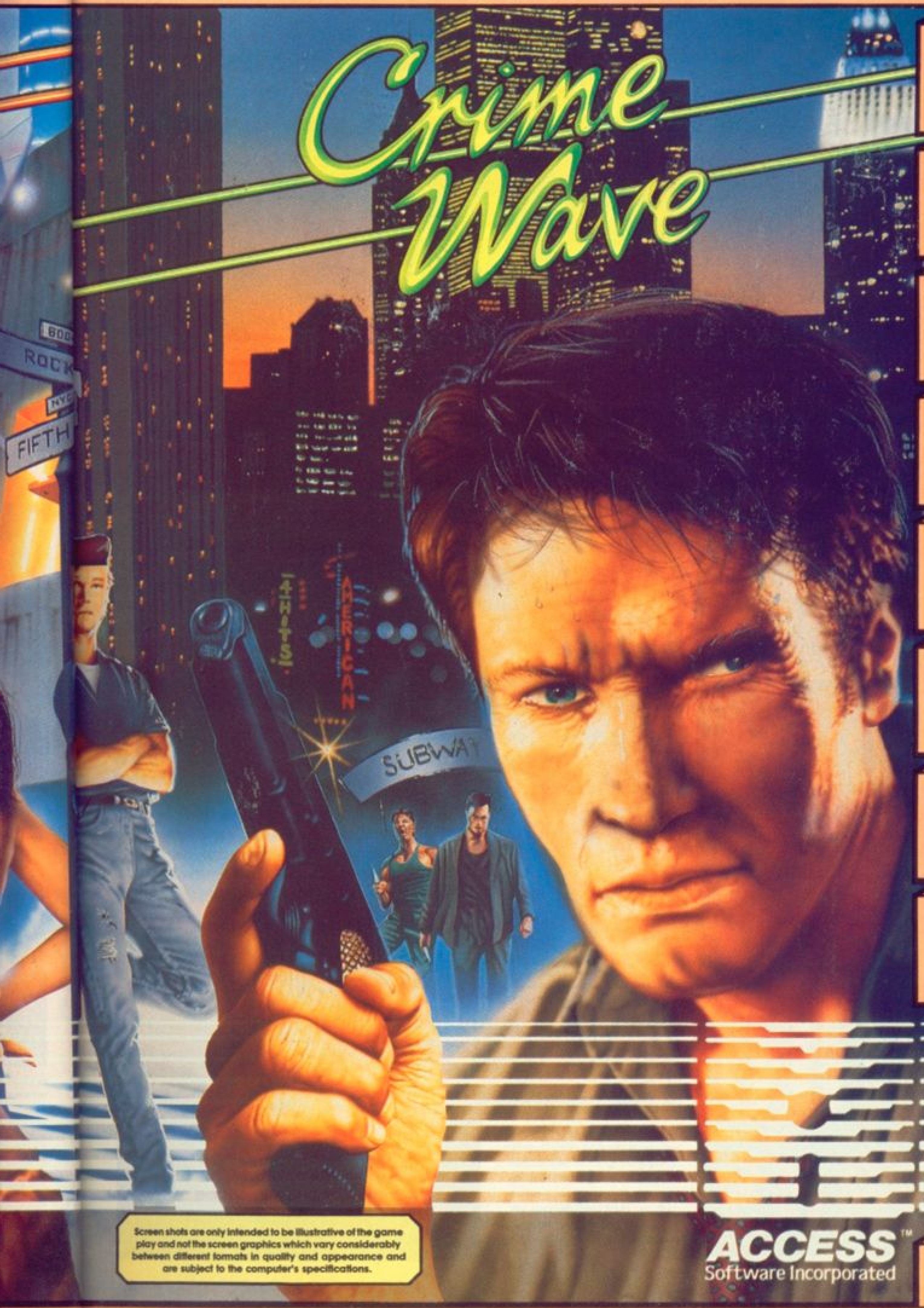

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Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computer's specifications.

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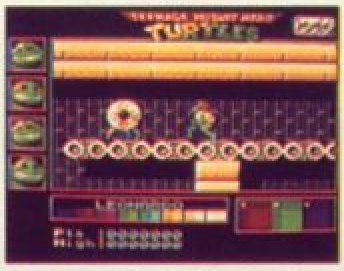
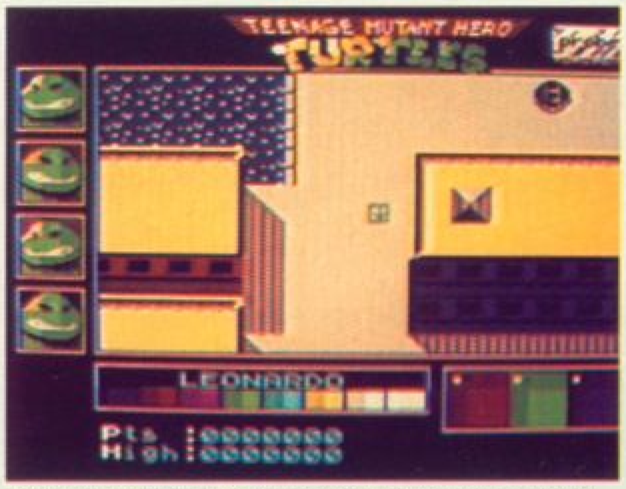


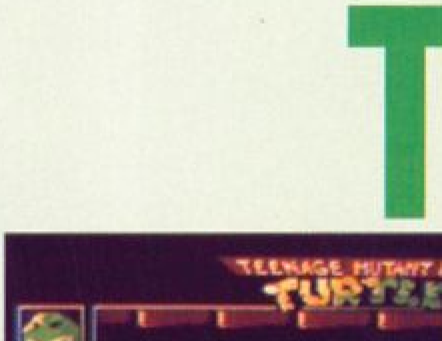
Spectrum version: heading along the upper platform of one of the warehouses



Overhead view of the street. Access to the underground sequences is via the manholes

...for something Turtly different!

The story of how four baby turtles were accidentally washed into the new York sewer system, mutated (by a substance called Mutogen) into something other than your everyday amphibian and trained to become Ninja Warriors by a giant rat named Splinter is already a legend.



Platform/ladder action in a warehouse – some turtles cope better than others with split level combat

Whether you're obsessed with cash (see panel), violence (the UK authorities insisted on calling the little ninjas 'heroes'), healthfood (they set a terrible example, existing almost entirely on pizza), or Renaissance art (Splinter named them after his favourite Renaissance Artists), you'll find a sympathetic (or unsympathetic) chord struck by the Turtles, whose real attraction seems to be their ability to be all things to all people under the age of 16. Goodman and Laird, the American duo responsible for unleashing Turtlemania upon the World, could never have dreamed of the success that such unlikely characters would bring.

Placed in the sweaty palms of the marketing media,

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All you have to do to be one of 10 ludicrously lucky winners is to identify 2 products from the Imageworks stable, printed somewhere absolutely inconspicuous on these two pages.

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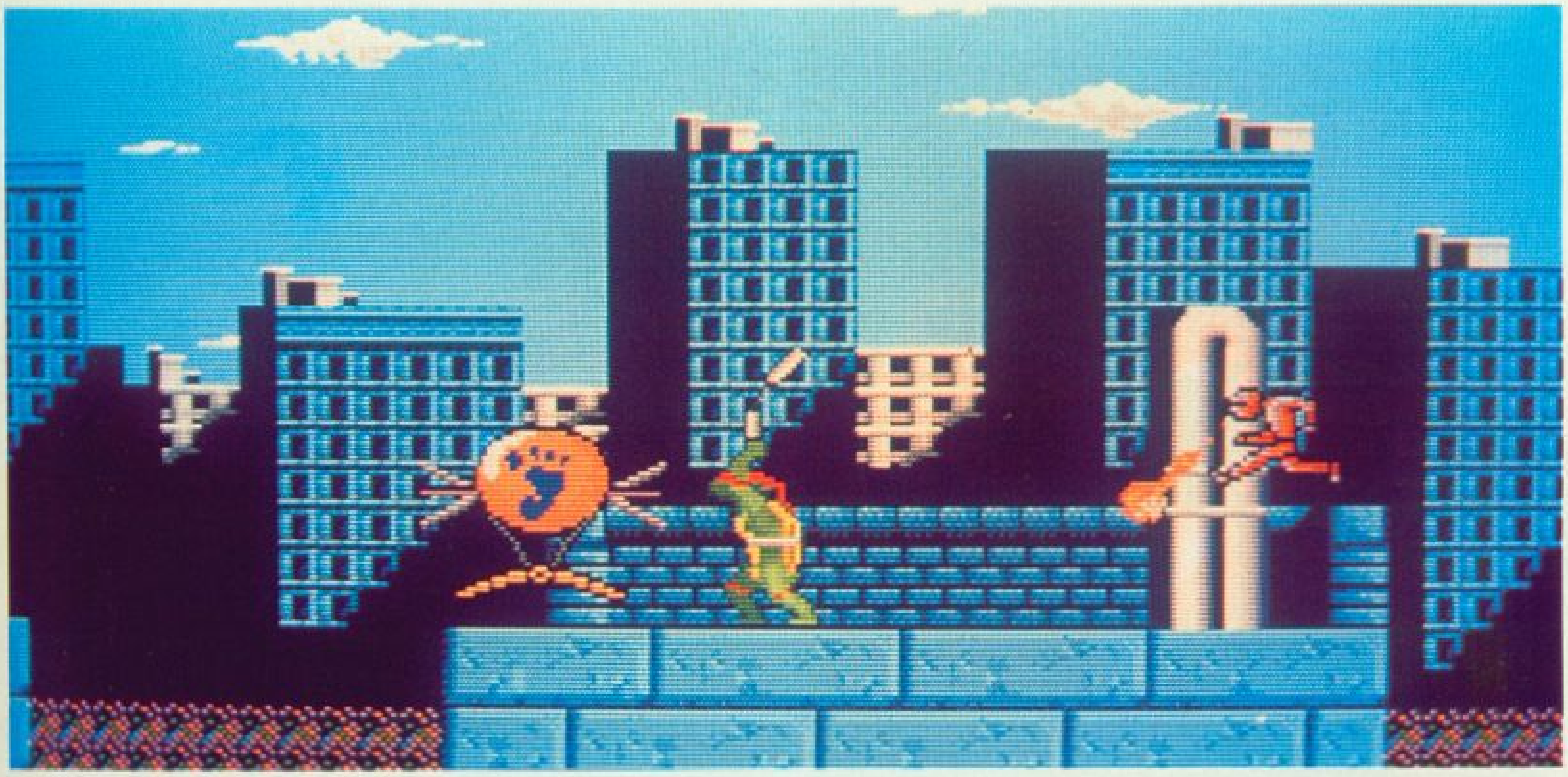
THE PRIZES

The senders of the first ten correct answers will each win themselves £100 worth of Turtles and Imageworks products. Free software, T-shirts, and other gifts could soon be piling through your door – get your entry in now!

"Cowabunga!"

Leonardo



Turtle traumas on the Amiga version, adding decent 16-bit presentation to the basic scenario

and possibly encouraged by the massive success of Nintendo's Mario Bros; Raphael, Donatello, Michaelangelo and Leonardo (in addition to a host of other involved characters) have spawned literally hundreds of spin-offs, from cereals to video games. This ball may stop rolling one day, but not until its made the fortunes of a very large number of people.

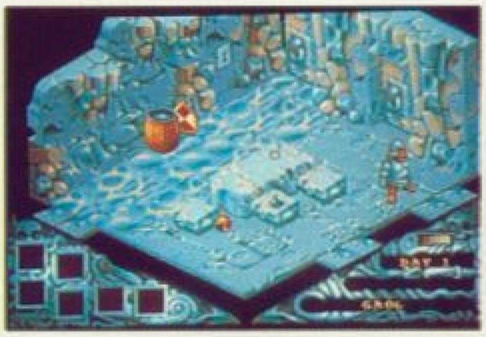
THE GAME

Licensed to Mirrorsoft, published by Imageworks, and programmed by Probe Software, *Teenage Mutant Hero* (forget that naughty Ninja word) *Turtles* is due for a November release, alongside the national cinema premier.

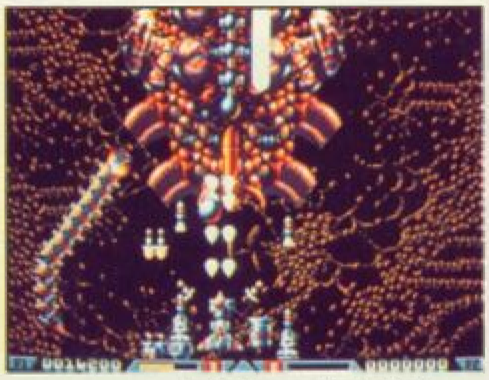
Although they're keeping things close to their chest, Mirrorsoft intend to improve upon the original graphic/arcade adventure licensed from Ultra/Konami and first seen on the Nintendo (and first reviewed, in the UK, here in ACE). It seems pretty certain, however, that there are going to be some similarities ('Coincidental', Probe assure us) between the original version and the UK one. Which isn't necessarily too bad because, as licenses go, this one had a goodly dose of gameplay, featuring primitive RPG elements that allowed you to switch control between the four mutant marauders in different situations.

Each turtle displays an aptitude for certain skills – wielding swords, throwing death stars, stabbing lances, and swinging sticks – in their multi-level search for gorgeous girlie April, making cadavers of numerous baddies along the way.

So far both 8-bit and 16-bit versions are looking pretty good, with the 8-bit versions showing some particularly impressive graphics. Already well known for their excellent original product, *Xenon 2* and *Cadaver* for example, Imageworks look as if they may have a sexier little number here than one might expect. How the final product plays obviously remains to be seen, but with the current buzz, TMHT looks set to be the obvious Christmas number one.



One of the excellent Imageworks titles – guess what game this comes from and enter the name as the answer to question number one on your card.



Another Imageworks product! Guess what game this comes from and enter the title as the answer to question number two on your card.

SHREDDY CASH

Although as yet unreleased in the UK, the movie alone is currently the largest grossing film in the Variety Magazine box office report (top 50), taking $132,180,845 during its current run. That works out at a staggering figure of just under one million dollars per day!

COMPETITION RULES

1. The closing date for the competition will be Friday the 5th of October.
2. Multiple entries ARE permitted, but photocopied entry forms will NOT be accepted.
3. The competition is NOT open to anyone associated with either Mirrorsoft or Emap Images.

HELP!

If your entry cardform was missing from the front of this month's issue, you can send us an entry on a normal postcard. Put your answers to the two questions, your name and address, plus your T-shirt size (S/M/L), your age and the machine you own. Post the entry to ACE Turtles Competition, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU.

Note that the cardform also included a £1 discount voucher from Imageworks for entry to the Computer Entertainment Show (15th/16th September). If it was missing, you can use the one printed BELOW – but please note that you can only use ONE voucher per person.

The Computer Entertainment Show promises to be the greatest games event of 1990, and Imageworks are delighted to offer you a special £1 reduction off the usual entrance fee of £5. Just present this voucher when you turn up at the show and you'll save some cash towards your next game!

The coupon is valid only for the public days of the Show – Saturday/Sunday 15th/16th September 1990. Admission times 9.00am to 6.00pm. The venue is the Earls Court exhibition hall.

Please note:
- This coupon must be surrendered at the time of ticket purchase to qualify for discount. Only one coupon per person. Photocopies not admissable.
- The organisers (EMAP International Exhibitions plc) reserve the right to refuse admission. Laws relating to public health and safety at any large public event may necessitate a restriction on entry, so access cannot be guaranteed.

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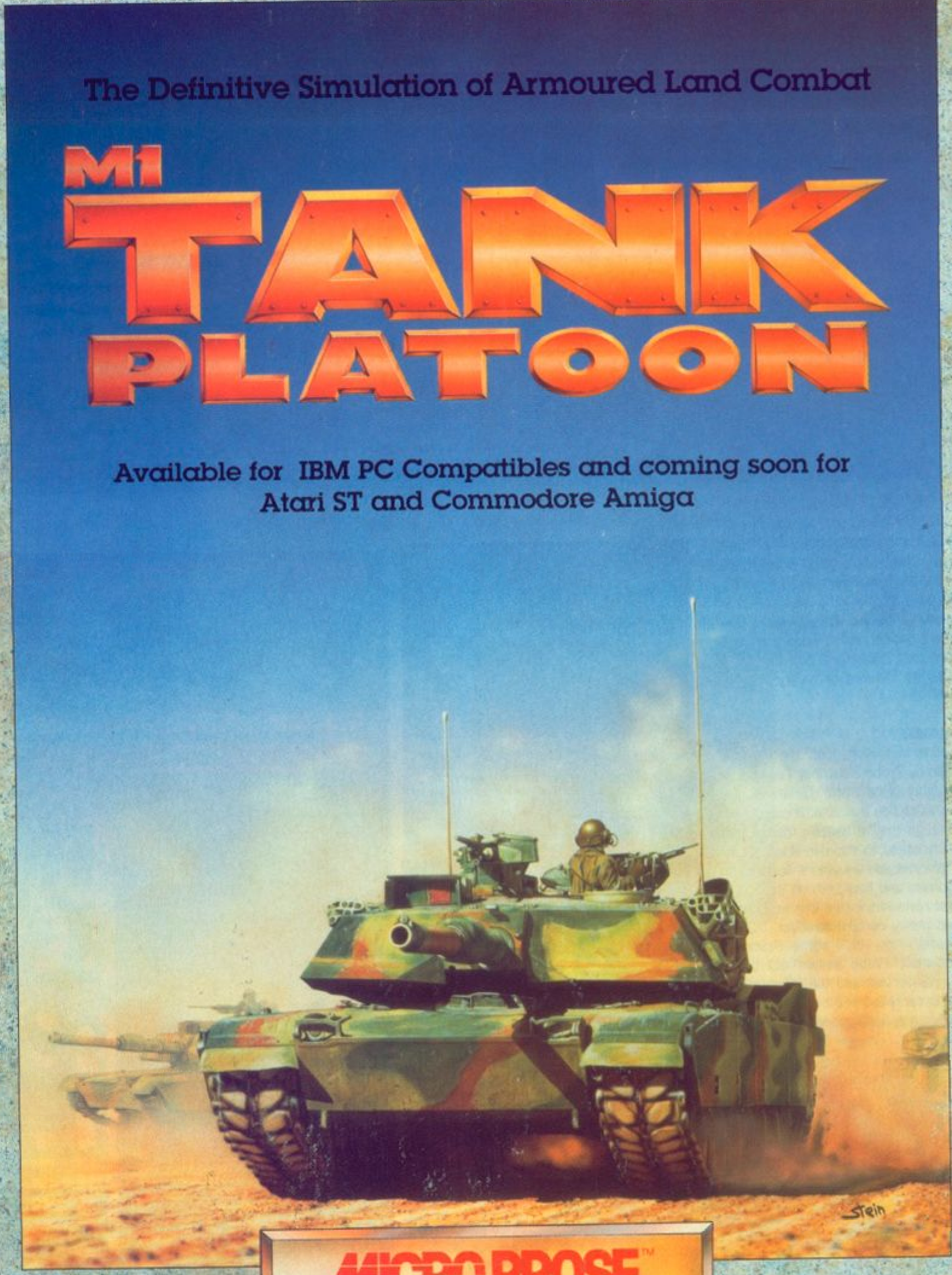

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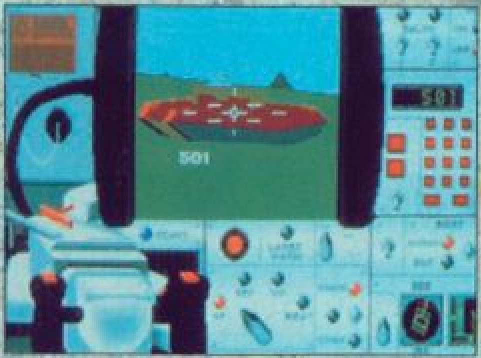
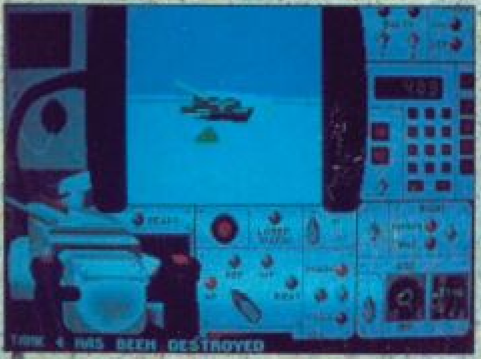
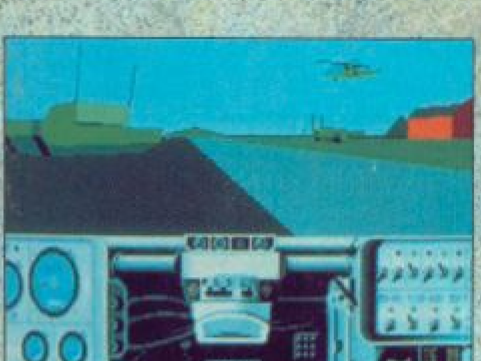
M1
TANK PLATOON



• Leadership. Each of the 16 men in your tank platoon has his own battlefield skills and abilities. Improving with experience, promotion and decorations, your chances of success increase as your platoon become battle hardened.



IBM SCREEN SHOTS SHOWN. ACTUAL SHOTS MAY VARY



• Strategic and tactical command. Plan your winning strategies, giving orders to your platoon of tanks, calling in airstrikes and artillery. At any moment you can 'jump' into the thick of the action, taking over direct control, as commander, gunner or driver of any tank.

• Realistic Battlefield terrain. Make use of natural cover, such as hills, ridges and buildings to hide your tanks, across the huge 16,000 acre 3-D battle zone, just like a real tank commander.

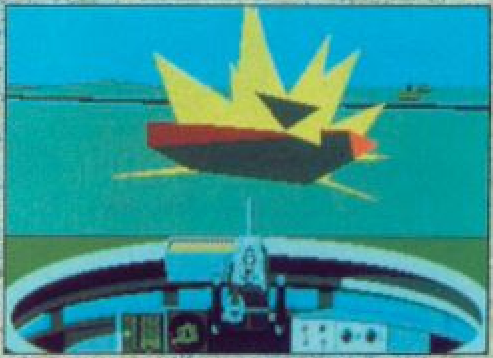
• High-tech war. Laser rangefinders, depleted uranium penetrators, wire-guided missiles, reactive armour, air support and artillery make M1 Tank Platoon the most comprehensive, up-to-date simulation of armoured land warfare available for your home computer.

M1 Tank Platoon was released for IBM PC compatible machines in October 1989;

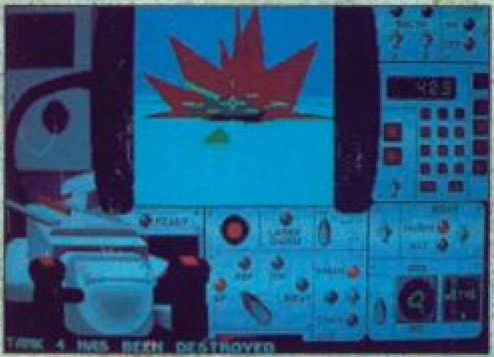
"MicroProse has surely excelled on this one: it's all there, from superb playability through great attention to detail to one of the best manuals I've seen in a long time. The competition should watch out, as this one's going to take some beating." *** PC Leisure Spring '90**

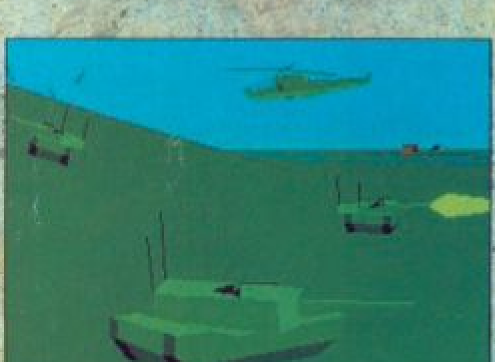
"I can't really fault M1 Tank Platoon as it's definitely MicroProse's most comprehensive simulation yet." 87% C&VG Nov '89

"The most frighteningly accurate tank sim we've seen." 926 Ace Dec '89

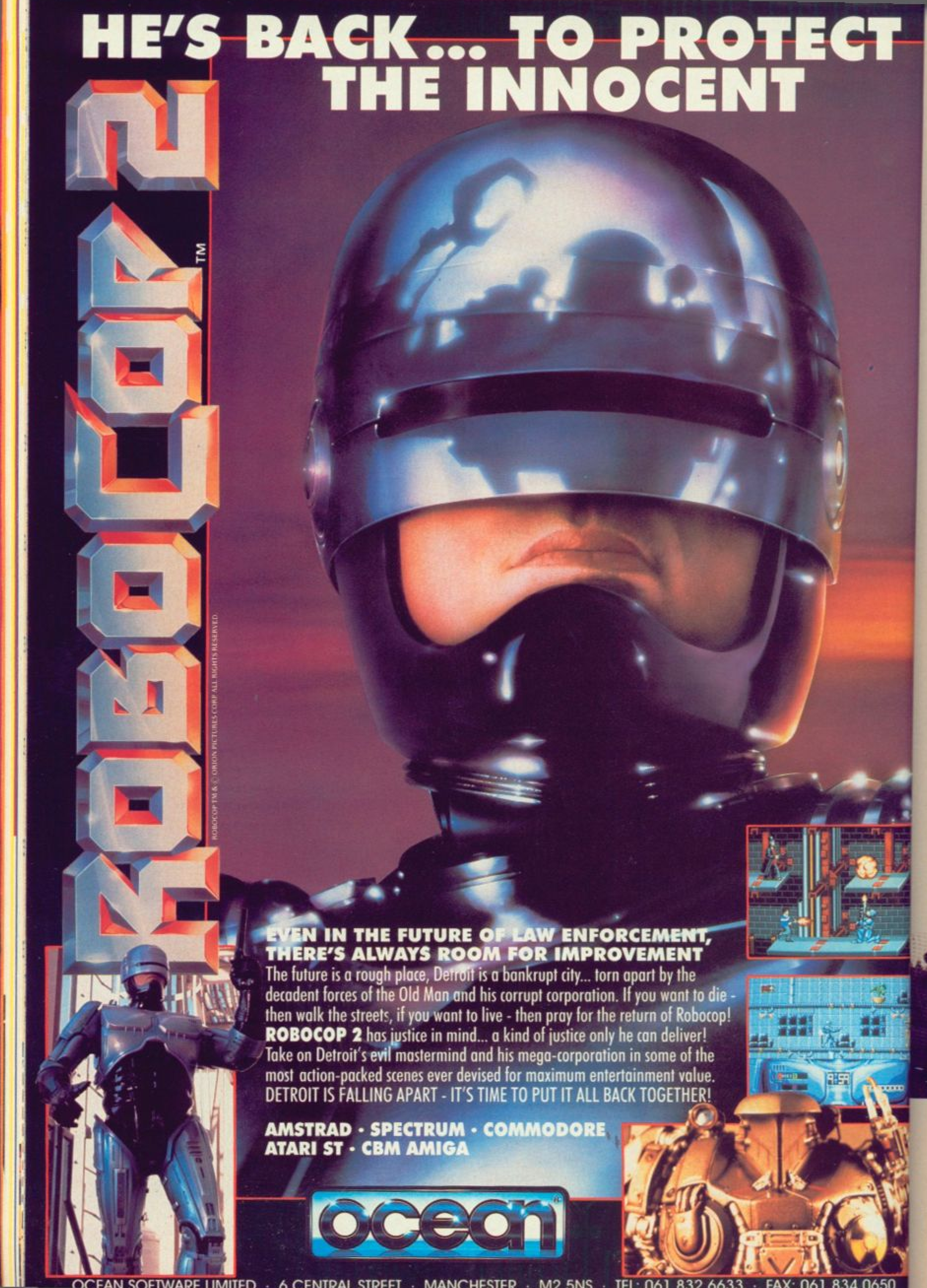


• Endless variety. Fight during the day, at night, in snow, mud, rain or clear weather. With thousands of battlefields and millions of situations and you get endless enjoyment. Decide between single battles or an entire campaign.





HE'S BACK... TO PROTECT THE INNOCENT



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EVEN IN THE FUTURE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

The future is a rough place, Detroit is a bankrupt city... torn apart by the decadent forces of the Old Man and his corrupt corporation. If you want to die - then walk the streets, if you want to live - then pray for the return of Robocop! **ROBOCOP 2** has justice in mind... a kind of justice only he can deliver! Take on Detroit's evil mastermind and his mega-corporation in some of the most action-packed scenes ever devised for maximum entertainment value. DETROIT IS FALLING APART - IT'S TIME TO PUT IT ALL BACK TOGETHER!

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The future– LIVE!

"These self-developing ultra-violet prints are great stuff."

Buck Rogers strip forecasting the development of the Polaroid (eventually produced 1970) in 1929

A grandfather and grandson are chatting about the 'Good Old Days'. Grandfather is, as usual, doing most of the talking...

'The year 1990? Of course I remember it, my boy. That was the year of the ... um ... er ... just let me check the diary. *(Speaks to diary card.)* 'Diary, list major events of 1990'. Ah, here we go, just searching its memory banks. Get a new diary? But why? It's too big? No thank you, I'm perfectly happy with the credit card size and besides, I'm too old for all this subcutaneous implant, direct cerebral input business. *(Diary begins to display the requested information.)* Right, it says here ... 'Mike Tyson defeated, Nelson Mandela released, Iraqi Gulf Crisis resolved by Pygmis and ... oh yes ... the first Computer Entertainment Show...'

'What? Yes, that's right, the first! Well, all oaks grow from small acorns, you know. Hard to believe the biggest inter-planetary entertainment software show was once confined to one small four dimensional building in Earls Court. Oh, it's all flooding back now – the lights, the glamour, the heat, the stars. Dame Betty Boo was there, you know, though she was a mere slip of a girl then.

THE GAMES...THE GLORY

'Games were a lot different then, too. They took place on crude 2D bitmapped videoscreens, with only about 16 or 32 colours used at once – a far cry from the four-wall high-definition holoscreens you've got in your gameroom. What sort of games? Oh, shoot-'em-ups, platform games, graphic adventures (come on, you remember, I showed them to you in the Museum of Leisure on Mars and you said they were 'quaint'). Nearest you got to the sort of games we get today were films, but they weren't interactive and the outcome was fixed. Yeah, similar to story implants, but without the emotion centre stimulators.

'The amount of involvement possible in these games was limited by the method of interaction. In those days they only had a joystick, a mouse or a keyboard, nothing like the neural link and body sensors in your gameroom. And the only feedback you got was via your eyes and ears, no electronically-induced nerve manipulation. Oh no, if your spaceship crashed then all you got was a flash and a bang, none of that ghastly Syntho-pain® you get nowadays.

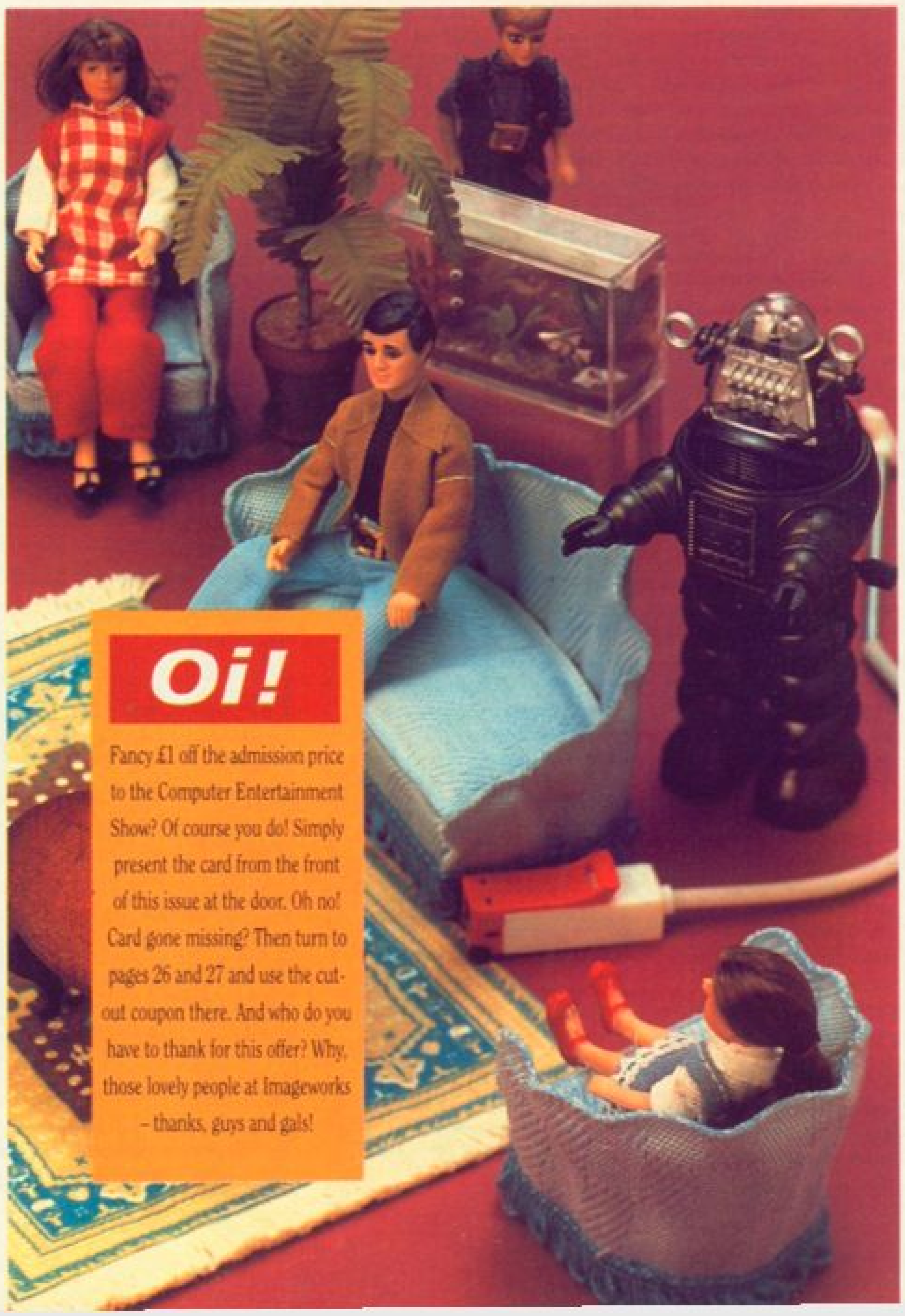
'What? Interact with artificial personality constructs? Of course you couldn't! Computers had nowhere near the speed or memory storage for that sort of realism. No, back then the first CD-I machines were only just starting to appear. They were slow, and the very first machines had problems with pulling data from storage onto screen, so the games, albeit of greater depth, tended to consist of still frames with music, rather than the full motion video you get today. And the interaction was still primitive, although developers were researching into movement sensors, control gloves and speech recognition.

'Yes, I know there will be queues, but this is ridiculous: CES isn't due to open for another forty years...'

THE MARCH OF PROGRESS

'As I remember, things really started buzzing in the '90s. And I guess it all started at that first CES show. Take interactive CD, for example, shown in the...what was it? Oh yes, the Living Room of the Future exhibit done by ACE magazine (still around, you know, they've just bought up Max-Murd Inc). Eventually those CD thingies achieved the speed for full motion video while manipulating sound and game data, and things really began to take off. With high-definition TV becoming popular, gamers began to experience the full realism potential of those game systems. Oh, I can remember the adrenalin rush even now – we'd never seen anything like them, a total audio/visual experience. They blew away everything that had gone before. Game production became more like film production, with script writers, researchers, directors, and so on.

The following years, just after you were born, saw the advent of ... Oh but sorry, I'm beginning to sound like your learning centre. You'll have to stop me if I start to lecture. You know all about the rest, of course, because you use it every day. So, where did we start? Ah yes, the Computer Entertainment Show! You know, I was a sceptical little tyke then. I remember walking around that ACE Living Room of the Future and thinking that none of what was on show could ever really take off. How wrong I was!



Oi!

Fancy £1 off the admission price to the Computer Entertainment Show? Of course you do! Simply present the card from the front of this issue at the door. Oh no! Card gone missing? Then turn to pages 26 and 27 and use the cut-out coupon there. And who do you have to thank for this offer? Why, those lovely people at Imageworks – thanks, guys and gals!

Futures present

All our tomorrows today at CES. Here's a quick roundup of futureshox that could gladden your eyes at the Show on the 15th and 16th of September...plus a fond look back at futures past...

- The US Gold stand will be hosting the International Games Championship, where crack gameplayers from Japan, France, Germany, Italy and the UK will pit their skills against other in the ultimate test. Forget the disappointment of the World Cup – this is what our national pride is riding on (and we've got more chance of winning)!
- Gremlin will be running the Lotus Esprit Turbo Challenge to promote their new game of the same name. The action will take place on a huge video wall and contestants will sit in purpose-built Lotus seats. Autofans can ogle a real Lotus Esprit on display, as well as a Suzuki racing bike to promote the new Team Suzuki game.
- Derek Bell, the motor-racing marvel, will be applying his track-honed driving skills to a wide range of computer racing simulations.
- Those who feel like testing their gameplaying mettle should make their way to the Virgin Mastertronic stand where, for a small fee that will be given to the Childline charity, you can play a head to head with the winner of last years Sega Challenge.
- Fans of Brookside and EastEnders will have the opportunity to see which programme employs the best gamesters as members of the casts compete in a computer challenge.
- There will be the chance to have your photo taken with one of the galaxy of stars visiting the show.
- Turtles fans will no doubt be queuing around the ACE stand in their millions, because the beshelled foursome, courtesy of Mirrorsoft, will be there IN PERSON (gosh!) to personally sign copies of the magazine. (Careful with that nunchaku, madam.)
- There'll be a Karaoke (the Japanese singalonga backing tape) competition, with a special video introduction from pop 'sensations' Wet Wet Wet. All proceeds will again be going to Childline.
- You've read about it, now experience the reality. Take Microprose's *F-15 Strike Eagle* arcade flight sim for a spin; it'll be on freeplay all day at their stand.
- All through the weekend there'll be a variety of musical acts. Kiss FM, one of London's newest radio station, will be presenting some scratch DJs who will amaze you with their turntable prowess and Jazz Amiga, sponsored by Commodore, will be having jamming sessions.
- Of course, there will be a host of new hardware and software products on display. The ACE tips for the big hits of the show in these two departments? The official UK release of the Sega Megadrive from Virgin Mastertronic and the remarkable *Powermonger* from Electronic Arts.

Live for speed...Gremlin's Lotus Esprit license roars into action at CES

LIVE THAT ROOM!

ACE's exhibit at the CES gives you the chance to see demonstrations of some of the hottest new developments from major companies in Britain and the World. Information panels on the walls of the Living Room of the Future will explain how the technology on show will apply to YOU in years to come, and there'll be actual demonstrations and models featuring tomorrow's technology. The Room will concentrate on the following five main topics:

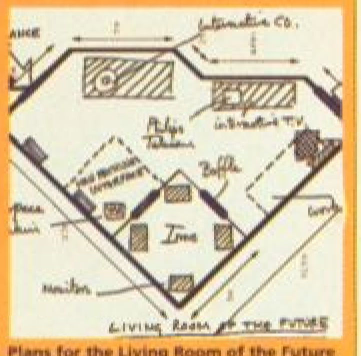
- **Interactive CD – It's something ACE has been championing for a long time now, and you may be wondering what all the fuss is about. Come along and understand why we're excited about it and why you should be too!**

- **Communications – Could we ever have Dungeon Master played over the 'phone lines, with interaction between players? Find out about the exciting possibilities of high-band width telephones and other aspects of the communications revolution.**

- **Cyberspace – You've read the books, now experience the reality. Learn how the man-machine interface will be revolutionised with the advent of biofeedback and speech recognition and the truth about alternate realities.**

- **Interactive TV – Ever been frustrated by your inability to participate in a TV debate? Soon you may be able to and, combined with high-definition TV, you'll feel like you're actually in the studio with the guests!**

- **Home workstations – Imagine a future where you'll never have to leave home to go to work. Discover how your car will be able to tell you how to get from A to B, and avoid any nasty roadworks. And you'll be able to get your face on the cover of ACE! Find out more on the day – and don't miss it whatever you do.**



Plans for the Living Room of the Future stand at the Show. Enter the Future and be amazed!

POWER GLOVE

The Power Glove: just one example of the developments in man-machine interfaces that you can find out more about in the Living Room of the Future...

...and futures past!

Science Fiction has been trying to put people into the Living Room of the Future for decades, but it's surprising how few books or films actually portray a radically different yet believable and practical future.

The typical manner in which the future is depicted is to take contemporary characters and locations then 'bolt on' futuristic devices, which give the stories a veneer of propheticism yet present the reader with situations that are easily recognisable from real life.

This trend started way back in the last century with Jules Verne (i.e. the Nautilus in Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea). The novels of the Golden Age of Science Fiction in the 30s and 40s were rife with this phenomenon – no matter how many ray-guns, giant spaceships, aliens

YOU DIDN'T MISS IT BECAUSE IT WASN'T THERE!

Here are a few of the things that you WON'T be seeing at this years Computer Entertainment Show:

- **Commodore CD-TV – This could be the product to start the CD-I revolution, but not if we never see one! Commodore are holding it back for the trade. Shame!**

- **Damocles – Novagen's follow up to Merc... oops, sorry, this is actually out now!**

- **The rumoured ZX81 console, with its powerful monochrome display and state-of-the-art BEEP chip, will now apparently stay just that – a rumour. Yet another missed chance for the nascent UK console business.**

...more absent friends opposite...

and robots were crammed in a story, the situations were still recognisable (and generally interchangeable with Cowboy stories).

When people did make the effort to think seriously about the future, the results tended to be bleak. Good examples of these pessimistic visions are Fritz Lang's classic 1926 film Metropolis – in which people, rather than being liberated by technology, became its slaves, toiling all day in mindless labour simply to keep a huge city running – and George Orwell's novel 1984 (1948), which portrayed a dystopia where every living room is fitted with a huge TV screen that couldn't be turned off and which is used by the fascist State to spout propaganda and spy on the populace.

FUTURE PARANOIA

In the 50s and early 60s the development of the atomic bomb and fear of Communism lead to a growth in paranoid fantasies populated by overgrown natural fauna or bug-eyed monsters. Mankind, it seemed, was too busy fighting for its very survival to worry about the future.

At this point, special mention should be made of the author Ray Bradbury, who had several interesting ideas of how the media would impact on our lives long before even TV was fully established. In Fahrenheit 451 (1951), the protagonist's wife spends all day in a room made of four giant TV screens, soaking in mind-numbing soap operas pumped out by the State to keep the population docile.

Even more interesting was the short story The Veldt, collected in the anthology The Illustrated Man, which posed a children's playroom that simulated any environment, such as a medieval castle or, as the title suggests, an African veldt. In a similar way to which experts think current multi media devices could develop, this simulation could be walked around and interacted with totally, just like reality. In fact, it was so real that, in a technophobic twist typical of the times, the simulated lions of the veldt killed people!

...AND MORE ABSENT FRIENDS...

- **The PC Engine – shelved by NEC until the second quarter of 1991 – and at that rate we may never see it.**
- ***Ramrod*, Gremlin's 3D isometric arcade game, was previewed in ACE issue ONE! It's still officially 'in production'!**

Following the Vietnam War, the dystopia theme was explored again in films such as THX 1138 (directed by George 'Star Wars' Lucas), Alphaville and Logan's Run , amongst many others. A more optimistic view was given by Stanley Kubrick's 1968 film 2001 – A Space Odyssey. These films are typical of the futures popular around the late 60s and 70s, where people wander around white, antiseptic, plastic rooms wearing awful one-piece suits.

So many of these visions of the future are way off the mark, generally underestimating the current technological rat-race. For example, in the 30s, 40s and 50s, many writers didn't think that there'd be a man on the moon until the next century, yet the combination of World War II and the Cold War encouraged rapid research and human feet touched lunar soil in 1969. Likewise, no-one foresaw the incredible information and communication explosion produced by the development of the silicon chip.

The ramifications of this boom have still to penetrate the majority of SF. In particular, the films still stick to the old scenarios/new technology formula. Even Bladerunner (1982), which is widely regarded as a 'realistic' view of the future, hardly acknowledges the impact that computer technology will have on us all. O.K., there's a two-way TV 'phone and a hologram viewer, but these ideas are not exactly new. In essence, the film is a 40s detective drama with flying cars.

More recently, Total Recall (1990) had the neat idea of artificial memory implants, and Schwarzenegger's living room had wall-size TV and a clever holographic tennis tutor, but it's still a future we can all recognise from now.

CYBERPUNK

The most interesting and plausible ideas of how things may go are provided by such authors as William Gibson and Bruce Sterling, leaders of the Cyberpunk movement. In the Cyberpunk future, the concepts of artificial realities and personalities, computer/human neural links, and societies where information is more important than money, are explored in depth.

But who's to say that these views, which currently seem quite probable, won't look as quaint and dated as those that went before. There may be a revolution in technology just around the corner that no-one can foresee, but you can be sure of one thing – if there is and it affects you, you'll read about it first in ACE!

GIMME IMME

How far are we from the Cyberspace dream? Not far, if Nolan Bushnell is to be believed (as reported exclusively in ACE 35) – he's already working on a consumer virtual reality product. One of the biggest problems to overcome will be that of human/computer interfacing. It's all very well have cinema quality visuals and CD sound, but how can you become totally engrossed if you're still having to click on menus with the mouse pointer or twist a joystick about? The machine's limitations are still getting in the way of the experience.

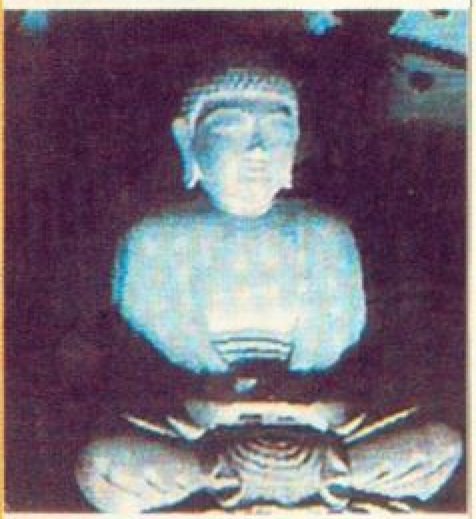
This could all change in the near future. Research and development companies across the World are already producing prototype speech recognition units which, although fairly primitive now, will improve. More immediately, remote control methods have already been seen, such as the Mattel Power Glove and Broderbund's U Force (both reported way back in ACE 23). When worn these gloves can be used to control on-screen events by simple movement of the arm.

The potential for these devices is already huge; you could actually press buttons or open doors in a game without being anywhere near the computer or the TV. If this could be combined with some sort of tactile feedback, so that you could actually feel the doorhandle as you turned it, the first true steps to virtual reality would be here. However, such a device would be highly complex, and is not going to be around for quite a while.

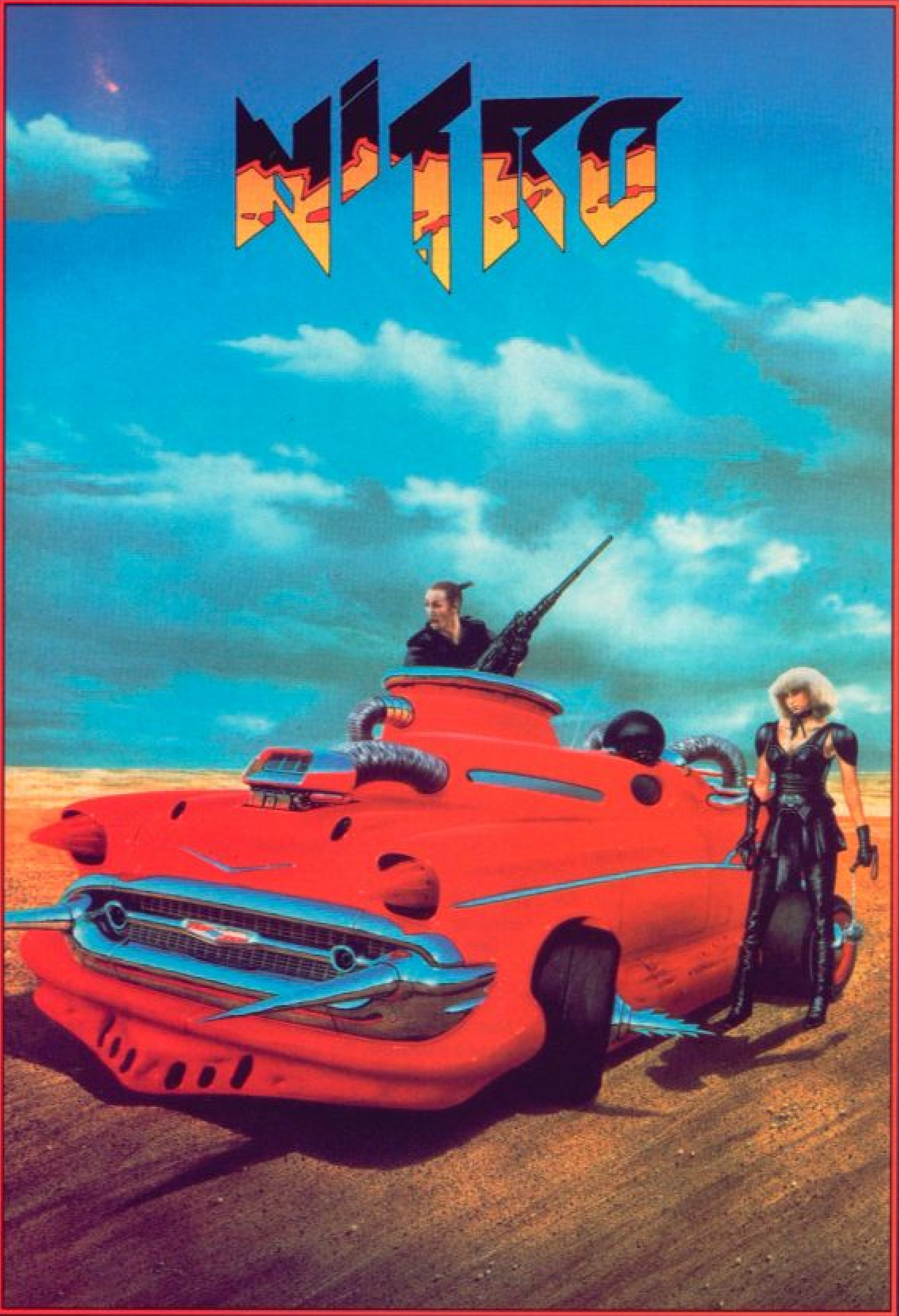
DANCE THAT VIDEO

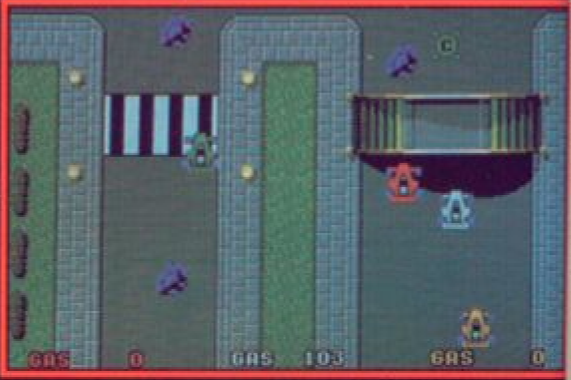
Another device with Cyberspace possibilities is the IMME (Interactive Multi Media Engine – reported in ACE 31). Basically consisting of a room lined with motion sensors, visual and audio events on four video screens are triggered by the movement of anybody in the room. Although currently just a collage of various images and sounds, the possibilities are incredible. Combine it with some sort of treadmill and you could walk around an artificial environment, interacting with it. Add sensor gloves with feedback and advanced speech recognition and the fantasy of Cyberspace would become a reality.

Interested in experiencing the birth of Cyberspace? Who isn't? ACE will have the IMME in the 'Living Room of the Future' and you will be able to sample its delights. Believe us, it's an experience you shouldn't miss!



An illustration of the kind of images thrown out by the incredible IMME system, which is sure to be one of the big crowd pullers at the Show.

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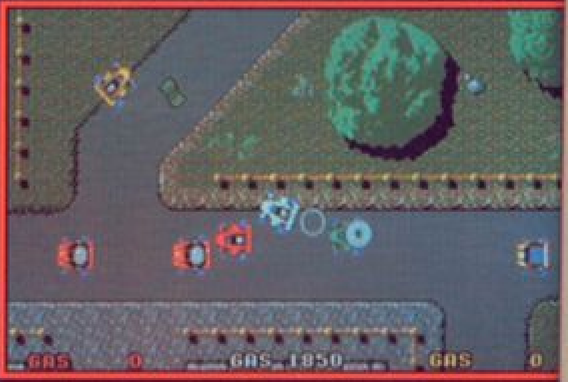
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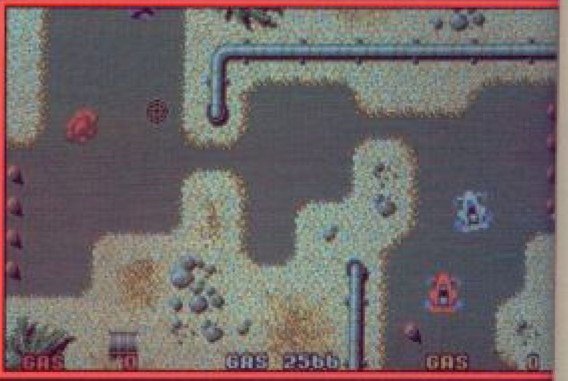
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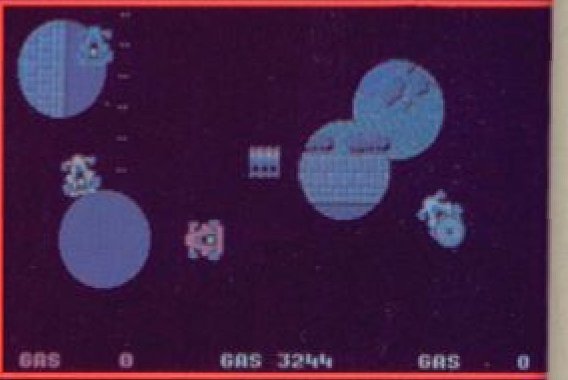
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Screen Shots from the Amiga version

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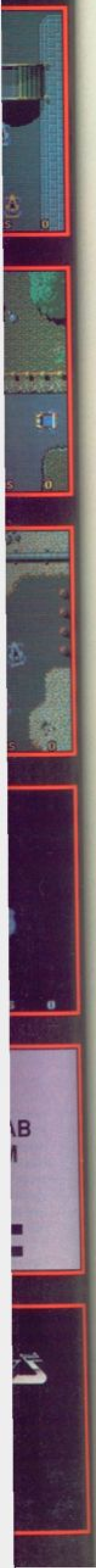


Power ...to our people!

Next month's ACE pulls no punches as we give our readers the ultimate games experience. Knowledge is power, friends, and with issue 38 you'll be putting on gaming muscle like there's no tomorrow...But there is, and here it comes...

First we'll be taking you from 1990 CES through to the year 2000 with the plans and future products of some of the world's biggest software companies. If you want to find out what you'll be playing in 2000AD, this is where you'll find out.

But that's not all. We're also bringing you:

- the low-down on MINDWARE – a new development featuring hardware and software for the BRAIN. Mark Healey will be bringing you the low down on a series of techlogical developments that are leading to the construction of unique Mind Gymnasium in London. Find out all about in issue 38.

- on-the-spot report from Millenium, featuring interviews with the programmers and designers of Resolution 101 and Archipelagos, to name but two. Plus the chance to find out about their latest projects – a futuristic sports game that combines competition with Resolution 101 graphics handling and a very weird sounding title that has you taking on the spirit of a North American Indian.

- The Chris Crawford Story. The programmer of Eastern Front, Balance of Power, Balance of the Planet, and Guns and Butter has had an enormous influence on gaming styles and coding. John Cook delivers the definitive ACE analysis of a major figure in games development.

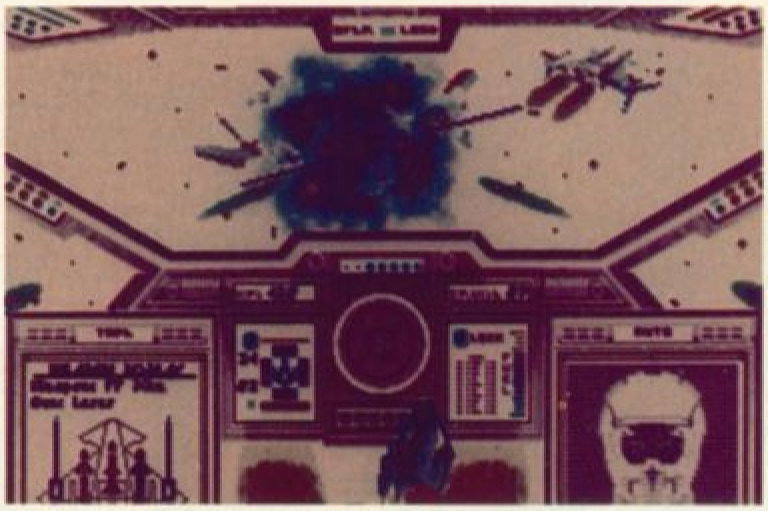
- On the spot reports from the States and Japan, including news from the CyberArts International conference in Los Angeles. You'll be able to find out about emergin interactive and multimedia technologies and their applications in the entertainment world, including holography, laser interactivity, and algorithmic art.

- *Wingleader* – a major exclusive review of the game that we previewed in issue 35. Recently renamed *Wing Commander*, it promises an incredible combination of 3D graphics and arcade gameplay. We've seen these routines in action for ourselves in the US and believe us, they're something else again.

- All the early autumn releases including *Rick Dangerous 2* and *Powermonger*...This month is going to be BIG.

- The biggest competition we've EVER mounted. We're not giving anything away except to say that for the first time EVERY reader will WIN! If you want to take part in the largest software prize bonanza of all time, reserve your copy now!

> *"Curly, if you want to be man, you've got to read this magazine"*
>
> **John Waine (no relation)**



Wingleader – now *Wing Commander* – looking mean in the ACE preview – and we mean to give it to you on the page next month

HAND THIS FORM TO YOUR NEWSAGENT

DEAR NEWSAGENT,

As a sophisticated user of highly complex electronic equipment for entertainment purposes, I want the chance to partake in ACE's largest competition ever. Please reserve for me a copy of the November issue of ACE magazine (Advanced Computer Entertainment), due out on Thursday October 4th. I shall be everlastingly grateful (and possibly rich).

My name...

My address...

....

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CHAMPIONS OF KRYNN

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The war of the lance is over, but evil is a BAD loser ... with the Dragon armies defeated and the lands to the east reconquered, the forces of good have withdrawn and settled down to a well-earned rest. Evil forces, however, never rest and have been quietly plotting a cataclysmic return to power! Their goal: nothing short of establishing the Dark Queen, Takhisis, as undisputed ruler of Krynn!

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computer's specifications.

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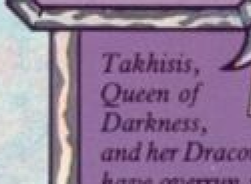

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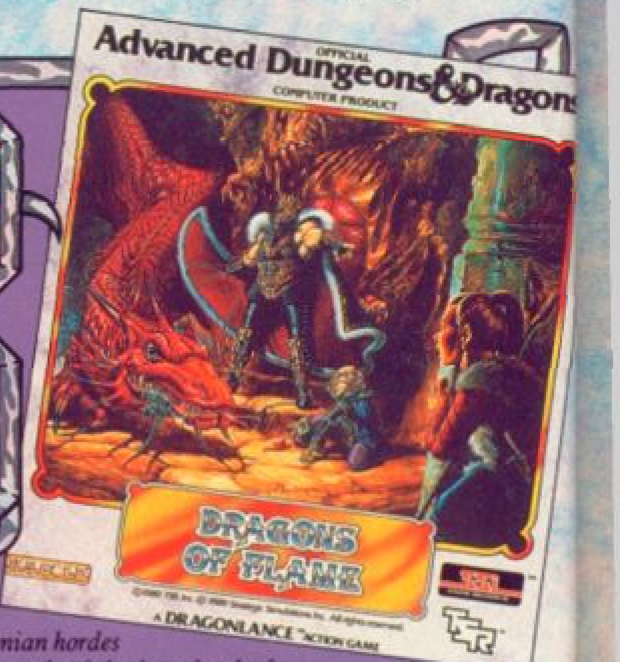

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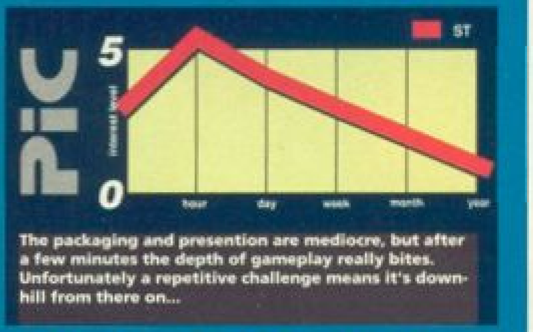
KONAMI

THE ACE PROMISE

1. ACE is DIFFERENT Unlike many magazines, ACE ONLY reviews finished games. If it's reviewed here, it's what you'll get in the shops. If there's any exception to this rule, the page will clearly be marked PREVIEW and the game is not rated. We won't let you down by reviewing half finished versions and demos. And to give you even better coverage, this month we've introduced the ACE Preplay feature. See opposite for full details.

2. ACE is DEFINITIVE Every game has been extensively tested. If we come across bugs or other deficiencies, we check immediately with the company concerned. Then we give you the whole story. Whenever possible, we'll give you more than just the review – analysis, comparison, and technical information is all included wherever possible.

3. ACE is DEPENDABLE All ratings are carefully calculated. You can rely on them to make your buying decisions. Not only do we insist on reviewing finished versions (see above), but we also make sure that all ratings are checked by the ACE reviewing staff. We GRILL those games!



The packaging and presention are mediocre, but after a few minutes the depth of gameplay really bites. Unfortunately a repetitive challenge means it's downhill from there on...

PIC POWER!

The PIC – *Predicted Interest Curve* – is the most sophisticated reviewing tool around.

We on ACE know you don't just play a game – you experience it. The Predicted Interest Curve is the only review system that takes this all-important factor into account.

The curve is divided into six sections, indicating the player's adrenalin level after one minute, one hour, one day, one week, one month, and one year. And this can tell you a lot more about a game than just the interest levels...

For example, a high one minute rating means that the game must look fantastic and get you all excited from the word go. That means it's probably a good game to show off to the neighbours – who probably aren't going to pay attention for much more than a minute anyway.

The minute, hour, and day ratings can tell you a lot too. If there's a dip here, followed by a rise, you've got a game that may take a bit of getting into. Alternatively, the graphics may put you off for a while until the gameplay starts to grip. Check out the PIC comment for more details.

Finally, you've got the month and year ratings. The better a game holds up here the more deserving it is of your hard earned cash.

SCREEN

Welcome to the ULTIMATE GAMES GUIDE

This month's section is even bigger and better than ever.

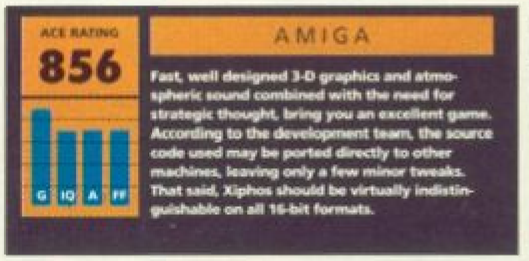
- **Bigger, because we've brought you more games, ranging from the superlative *Powermonger* to the ludicrous *Monty Python*.**
- **Better, because in our never-ending search for the prefect reviews section, this month we've introduced two new improvements: the ACE Preplay feature now keeps you right up to date with the latest product – see the page opposite for full details. And we've redesigned the ratings boxes to save space – space we use to tell you even more about the game.**

And don't forget – ACE is the only magazine with regular review sections for computers, consoles, and CDs, giving you complete coverage of games today – and tomorrow.

ACE RATED!

Question: Is this game really going to grab me? And for how long?

Answer: the PIC curve – the heart of the **ACE Rating System.**



AMIGA

Fast, well designed 3-D graphics and atmospheric sound combined with the need for strategic thought, bring you an excellent game. According to the development team, the source code used may be ported directly to other machines, leaving only a few minor tweaks. That said, Xiphos should be virtually indistinguishable on all 16-bit formats.

Each review carries a PIC Curve (see Pic Power panel) and special 'Version Boxes' that give you details of the game's implementation on a specific machine. These boxes include ratings out of ten for...

GRAPHICS

All aspects of the game's graphics – with the limitations of each machine taken into account.

AUDIO

The music and sound effects are rated here. A high rating is possible on even limited machines like the Spectrum and PC if the computer's shortcomings are cleverly sidestepped.

IQ FACTOR

The Brain Strain rating. Note that ACE readers are generally reckoned to be more intelligent than other human beings, so the ratings may be lower than you expect...

FUN FACTOR

Basically a measure of mindless addictiveness. Games like *Arkanoid* and *Flying Shark* require virtually zero brain power but are still remarkably addictive. Most coin-ops score well here because they are designed for instant satisfaction. Games don't have to be either fun or intelligent – they can be both.

ACE RATING

To get a really high rating a game will not only have to be very addictive but stand the test of time as well. Here' a general guide to what the ratings mean:

900+ A classic game, recommended without reservation.

800-899 A superb game, but perhaps lacking the long-term depth to last into the month and year categories.

700-799 Still recommended, but probably has a couple of aspects to the gameplay that take the edge off it.

600-699 The 'fair' zone, where it tends to be OK 'if you like that sort of thing'.

500-599 Not recommended. The game clearly has some noticeable problems.

400-499 Problems with gameplay and programming make this an inferior product.

300-399 Not only is the gameplay bad but the design is also seriously flawed. Very avoidable.

200-299 Things are getting really heavy now...Might be funny if you weren't expected to pay for it

100-199 Inferior ZX81 games running on an Amiga.

Under 100 An essential purchase due to rarity value and unparalleled degrees of awfulness.

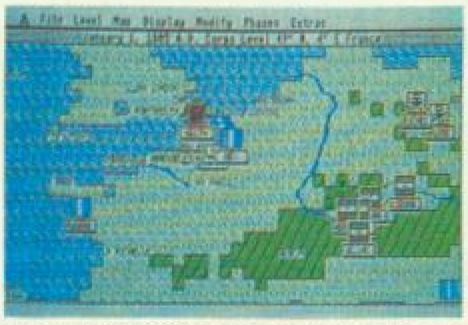
VERSION BOXES

This covers version-specific information on graphics, audio, loading problems etc. If there's no box for your machine but a version is planned, it'll be covered as an update in a later issue.

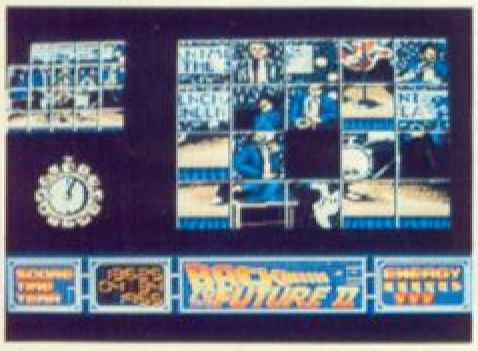
TEST

ABSENT FRIENDS...

Not every game makes it into Screentest each month. Naturally we have to pick and choose, making sure that we bring you the widest possible selection. Sometimes this causes us a good deal of grief, particularly when we feel that for reasons of space we have to leave out a game that deserves more exposure. Usually – as in the case of *UMS2* below – this is because we have given the program an extensive pre-production playtest in a recent issue, and the final version differs so slightly from the previous one that there's nothing more to add except the final seal of approval (or disapproval) in the form of an ACE rating. And sometimes we leave them out because we just can't bear to put them in!



UMS II – previewed in issue 35 – is every bit as good as we hoped it would be. A must for wargame aficionadoes, the new version has sensibly put functionality before appearance. For example, you no longer get those 'state of the art' 3D views of the battlefield (which were actually a bit of a drag and obscured your view). Out now at £24.99 for 16-bits and ACE rated at 915.



BACK TO THE FUTURE II – Let's hope the next BTTF game improves on its predecessors. *BTTFII* is a bit of a disappointment. Frankly, we felt that we could make better use of space this month by telling you about Imageworks' vastly preferable Cadaver than by cataloguing the failings of this little number. Expect to see it selling by the thousand despite limited gameplay, repetitive levels, a very poor puzzle section, and a charmless beat-em-up interlude.

👍	👎
● The very fast multi-level parallax scrolling ● Excellent sound effects in the dentist's waiting room ● Gameplay in the 3D maze Barbican section	● Limited use of objects ● Over-frequent disk access ● Colour combinations in the bedroom scene

INTRODUCING.... ACE PREPLAY

You now how we feel about reviewing unfinished games. Unlike some other magazines, we won't rate a game unless we're 100% convinced that it represents what you'll find on the shelves. In the past this has meant that we've been able to keep you better informed than our competitors – we were the only magazine, for example, that mentioned the dreaded word 'bug' in our review of F29 Retaliator.

Up until now, games that haven't been finished have been covered by us as Previews – either as features (see the Digital Image Design feature on Retaliator II in this issue, for example) or as previews within Screentest itself (indicated by the word Preview at the top of the page). We've now taken the Preview idea one step further and introduced ACE Preplays – games that aren't finished but are sufficiently playable for us to form opinions as to what could be done to improve them and where they show real promise.

To do this, we've introduced the ACE Preplay verdict panel. You'll find a couple of these in this month's Screentest. In each case, they accompany a game which we feel needs more than just a description of the scenario. And, of course, we'll make sure that the programming teams hear what goes into the panel, so that they can (if they agree) make some modifications to the game.

There's just one bug in the lettuce! The panel design wasn't ready until quite late in the schedule for this month's issue, so you'll find that some Preplay titles still have 'Preview' at the top of the page. From next month, however, Preplay will be a fully integrated and permanent feature of the Screentest scene...

ACE AWARDS

ACE always awards seals of approval for outstanding software performance. If a game really breaks the boundaries in sound, graphics, or originality you'll see the appropriate ACE Award flash on the review. Unless it's truly dire – in which case it'll get the ACE Turkey award. Software houses: you have been warned!

ACE RATED

ACE only awards this one to games of outstanding quality. A 900+ game is a classic title, recommended without hesitation.

ACE IDEA

Originality counts for a lot these days, and any games that have it deserve a special mention. This ACE award is reserved specifically for these rare games.

ACE GRAPHICS

One of the first things to grab you in a game is its graphics. Games that redefine the state-of-the-art get this seal of approval from ACE.

ACE SOUND

Sound is the 'forgotten' aspect of games – but can make or break them. ACE only awards this one to brilliant use of audio in a game.

THE LINE-UP

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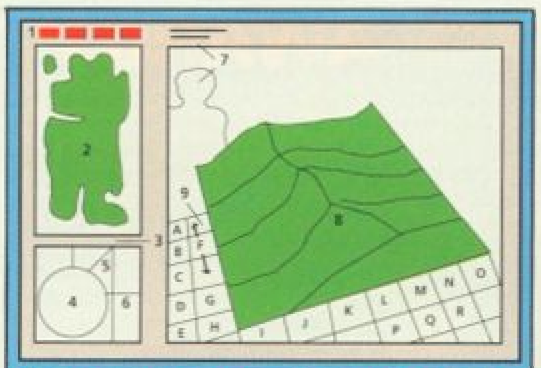


POWERMONGER SCREEN KEY

1:
Allows player to click between contour, political, landscape and people maps.

2:
The map currently selected, landscape in this case. Your leader can be clearly seen, with your men shown as white pixels. The white cross indicates the area in view on the main screen, and can be moved all over the map with simple mouse clicks, allowing you to keep an eye on enemy movements - it's the sort of ability Napoleon would've given his right arm for!

3:
Messages window.

4:
The compass. The large arrow always points North, and clicking on the compass points will move you in a direction relative to this.

5:
Click on these icons to rotate the landscape in either direction.

6:
These icons allows you to zoom in or out on the main view.

7:
The Leader of the Pack! The bars above indicate various facets of your current status. When other Captains are recruited, they queue up to the left and just behind the Leader, and can be switched between by clicking on them.

8:
Your window on the world. The view can be manipulated in just about any way possible, thanks to the flexibility of the polygons used to construct it.

9:
The few simple icons are the only controls you'll need to get into Powermonger.

A:
Save/load games.

B:
Spy on your enemies.

C:
Make alliances with other leaders.

D:
Trade with or bribe villagers.

E:
Query mode - click on any character on screen to learn pertinent information about them.

F:
The aggression levels - these are very important, as your attitude affects just about every interaction with other characters in the game.

G:
Return troops to base.

H:
Transfer men between Captains.

I:
Drop food.

J:
Pick up food.

K:
Search for food.

L:
Supply or stockpile food.

M:
Demob troops, i.e. send them back into food production.

N:
Conscript troops, i.e call them in from the fields.

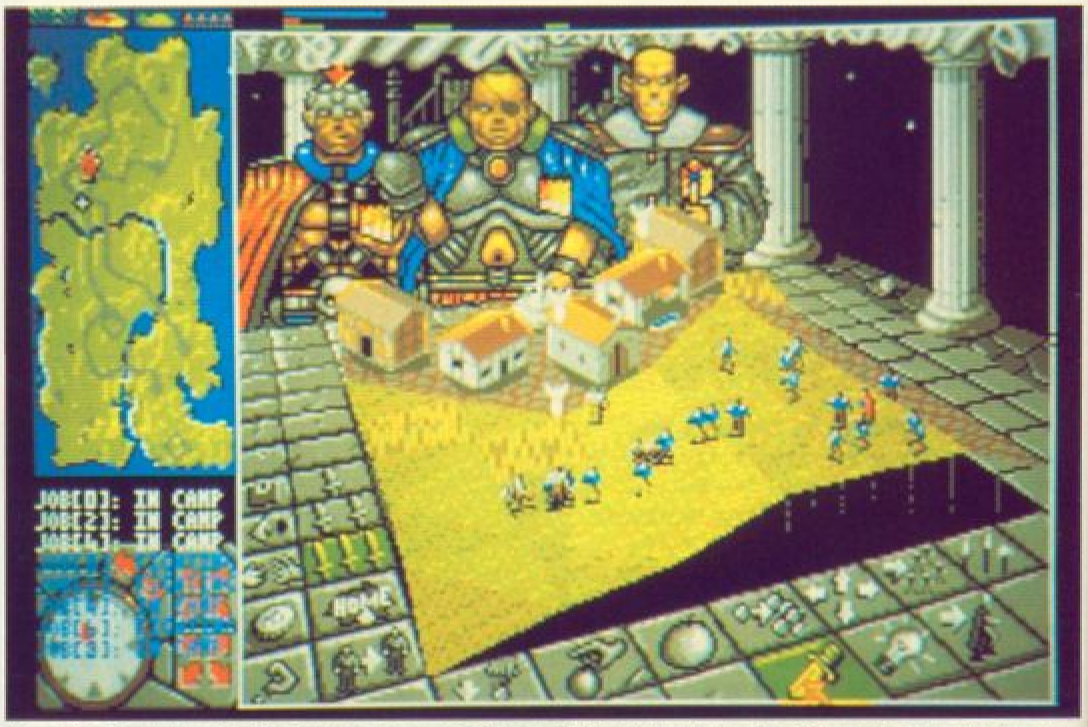
O:
Equip men with weapons, if available.

P:
Attack mode. When selected, simply click on the location you want attacked.

Q:
Invent mode.

R:
Send Captain. Having selected this, move the mouse onto the map and click on thd required destination.

The Bullfrogs: (left-right) Simon Hunter, Glenn Corpes, Sean Cooper, Les Edgar, Peter Molyneux, Kevin Donkin, Andy Tidy, Gary Carr.



Summer, and a young warlord's thoughts turn to war. Things are looking bad for the humble villagers defending their homes from your savage attack. Note the angels of the fallen rising to heaven.

POWER

If you thought *Populous* was something special, wait ELECTRONIC ARTS latest Bullfrog masterpiece a full the power 59 worlds – if everyone in Britain had creation of time, they'd be polishing off the last one

Bullfrog have long been a software development team to watch. After a relatively unimpressive start with the puzzle cum arcade shoot-'em-up *Fusion*, they really showed that they could compete with the big boys when they released *Populous*. A computer classic of our times, there can be few people who are not familiar with it. The ease of interaction, absorbing gameplay and stunning graphics evoked a real feeling of a world in microcosm occupied by people leading independent lives and generated a level of involvement unknown with most games.

So how do you follow up a computer legend? After a fairly quiet period, the Bullfrogs released *Flood*, a platform game which, although great fun, wasn't really in the same class as *Populous*. But that may just have been the lull before the storm, if the advance preview of their next release is anything to go by.

A few weeks after you read this, Bullfrog, on the Electronic Arts label, will be releasing *Powermonger* for the Atari ST and Amiga. Although comparisons with *Populous* are bound to be made, any similarities are largely superficial.

The player controls a warrior exiled from his homeland and, along with twenty loyal soldiers, find himself on the shores of a large island, part of a group of 200 making up the 'world'. This is a land that needs a King and who better to wear the crown than yourself? Unfortunately, the residents of the islands don't appreciate your upwardly mobile ambitions, and will do all they can to stop you. Raiding towns and villages will result in the occupants either fighting to the death or being 'persuaded' to become part of your merry band. Once enough people follow your flag, they will make you King. You can then move onto the next island.

Although the early islands are relatively easy and can be won by simply attacking as many natives as quickly as possible, it is only later, when you encounter similarly ambitious opposing leaders or 'Captains' commanding troops armed with superior weaponry and your own followers are collapsing from hunger, that you begin to realise that a little more strategy is required to succeed. It is about then that you also begin to appreciate the depth of the game and the amount of thought that has gone into it.

Defeating one of the Captains puts him in your control; he can then lead an independent faction on your behalf. However, an army marches on its stomach, and these longer campaigns will require that followers are allocated to food pro-

MONGER

until you get your hands on this! ACE gives playtested preview...*Powermonger* can generate 4 to started working through the worlds since the just about ... now.

duction. You can watch your people as they raise crops, tend cattle, herd sheep or even go fishing in the case of coastal towns. Should two near-by villages have a good year they celebrate by meeting up for a game of baseball - you can take a seat on the bleachers and cheer on your favourite side!

Alternatively you can set a village the task of inventing a new weapon, which could be anything from a bow and arrow to cannons. Naturally, the villagers need raw materials to do this so – say they need wood – they'll march off to the nearest forest and cut down trees. If they need metal ore, they'll set up a mine. You can then equip your men or trade these goods with other villages.

RIVER DEEP, MOUNTAIN HIGH

The graphics, which give an initial impression of *Populous*, are superb. The landscape is vector-graphic based and allows a great deal of flexibility; it can be zoomed in or out on, rotated, tilted and expanded to fill the screen to your own taste. The buildings and people are bitmapped graphics that grow or shrink but don't rotate – although this isn't noticeable during play.

This flexibility has allowed Bullfrog to reproduce a huge number of natural phenomena in the game. Just about every geological or geographical feature is present: there are plains, deserts, hills, mountains, rivers, valleys, waterfalls and forests; it rains and the seasons change, which is reflected graphically by specks of snow appearing on the ground and the trees losing their leaves as the world turns to winter.

These features, clever as they are, are not there just for cleverness' sake. Attack a hillside town from the slope and they'll see you coming from miles off and prepare defences, but attack from over the brow of the hill and you'll have the advantage of surprise. Make people attack in snowy weather and they'll not only eat more food, they may get lost or fed up and desert!

BIG IS BEAUTIFUL

One of the most breathtaking aspects of the game is its sheer size and scope. The game universe is huge (see box); each 'world' consists of 200 islands to be conquered, and each island is populated with 512 people with their own jobs and characters.

The Captains all have individual personalities; while a bellicose one will be great for a bit of hard bargaining over trade goods, he may have no idea of how to supervise the invention of a new weapon. Strategy pervades every aspect of the game, and the player must allocate his resources and time wisely.

This may lead you to think that this will all involve remembering hundred of commands and require thousands of key presses. Not so – the game has been designed with ease-of-use as one of the main objectives and, like *Populous*, all actions are governed by just 20 icons. The computer does most of the hard work for you and lets you just get on with playing the game. The islands have been designed so that new features and strategy elements are introduced gradually, allowing the novice to build up his or her proficiency before having to tackle the harder islands.

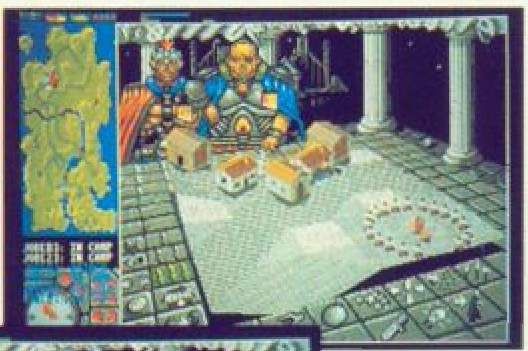
Of course, this prettier and bigger business is all very nice, but is it as good as *Populous*? Well, the honest answer has to be no – it's far better! In the space available I can only give a brief idea of the things to see and do, and this is still just the preview version! The final version should have several extra features, most importantly the sound effects (which we are promised will be very special on the Amiga) and the ability to spy and besiege villages, and these can only add to an already very exciting piece of software. Look forward to a full in-depth ACE review in the next issue!

● **David Upchurch**

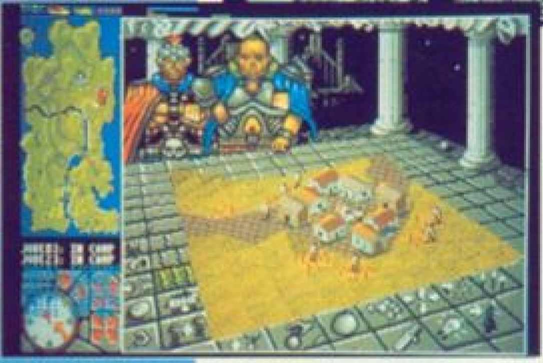
MEGA CODE

The boys at Bullfrog have been beavering away at Powermonger for the last 13 months, and all that hard work certainly shows. At maximum zoom out, which is only used to get a quick overview of the surroundings, things may seem to move a little sluggishly, but when you consider that the system is processing an incredible 2096 polygons and around 500 sprites you realise the immensity of the technical achievement.

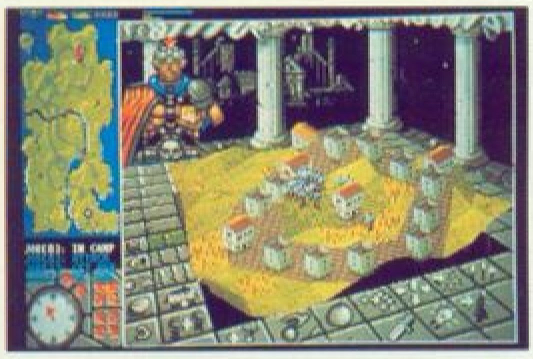
At medium range zoom, the level at which you'll play most of the game, everything zips along – and according to Peter Molyneux of Bullfrog the final version will be even faster, because they've developed a clever piece of code that intelligently allocates processor time to tasks as and when they are needed. Also, the use of space-saving polygons means that approximately 70% of total memory is used up by game logic – it's the largest piece of code that Bullfrog have ever written.



Your army takes up camp beside a tiny village as Winter begins to bite. Your leader is the tiny cloaked figure standing by the campfire warming his cockles (aah, the benefits of rank).



As a counterpoint to all the violence, a shot of simple farmers tending their crops.



Never get complacent in *Powermonger* – enemy forces are always growing. Here they're sweeping through one of the larger towns in the South.

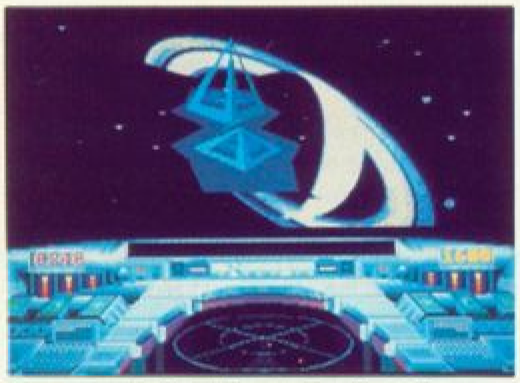
RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST/STE	£24.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£24.99	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£29.99	IMMINENT

No other versions planned

- **Incredible, realistic, interactive 'world' absorbs the player into the action.**
- **Huge and very enjoyable task with the dificulty scaled so that players can learn as they play.**
- **Highly flexible playfield viewing system that can be customised to the player's wishes**

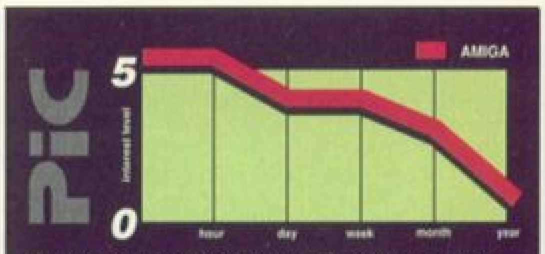
- **The game won't appeal to the straight slash 'n' shoot arcade fan with a three minute attention span.**
- **Graphics slow down at maximum zoom out, but this scale is only needed rarely.**
- **The game has too few bad points to fill the space available**



The serene setting for a Xiphon temple – about to be blown away!

This space epic – and big Christmas hope for the ELECTRONIC ZOO stable – bears more than a striking resemblance to *Elite*. Does it live up to its famous ancestor?

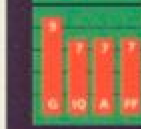
XIPHOS



The Amiga version of *Xiphos* is aesthetically excellent. Fast,well designed 3D graphics and atmospheric sound coupled with the need for strategic thought, combine to bring you a game which provides both initial and long-term interest. Once running, disk access is confined to loading levels and, due to the size of each Universe, this does not detract from the game. Firmly in the *space trading genre, Xiphos has nothing radically new to offer,* however, and this just robs it of an ACE rating.

ACE RATING

856



AMIGA

Fast, well designed 3-D graphics and atmospheric sound combined with the need for strategic thought, bring you an excellent game. According to the development team, the source code used may be ported directly to other machines, leaving only a few minor tweaks. That said, Xiphos should be virtually indistinguishable on all 16-bit formats.

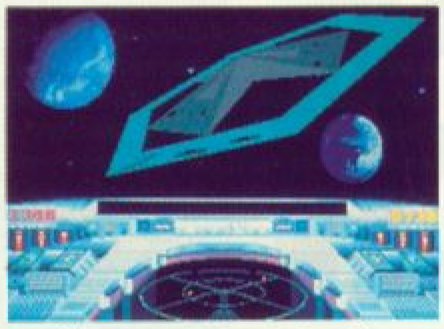
RELEASE DETAILS		
ATARI ST	£24.99dk	OCTOBER
AMIGA	£24.99dk	OCTOBER
IBM PC	£24.99dk	OCTOBER

No other versions planned

Civil war has broken out in the Xiphon system and you must traverse five Universes, trading with bases along the way and maintaining good relations with both sides, in your search for a sixth, central Universe and the cause of the conflict.

Control of your ship on this vast journey is best achieved via mouse buttons – used to advance and reverse – although the cursor keys provide an alternative. Firing uses the function keys (each of the first five emit a different weapon of successive capability). While this may seem an illogical choice, it allows the player the speed of movement necessary to react to rapidly changing situations – of which there are many.

Remaining controls allow operation of a docking beacon, map, identification reports and information. The latter two functions are incredibly useful within a game of this speed and type. Operating the ID function places a box around anything within your viewing range. In the instance of more than one object being present, repeated pressing cycles through until boxing the object of your choice. Once boxed, pressing F10 displays information on the object allowing you to decide what course of action to take.



One of the many gargantuan structures to be found in Xiphos – an orbiting space station

TACTICS AND GAMEPLAY

There are no strict guidelines as to the method of play open to you. Due to the enormity of the Xiphon system (there are 120 bases in level one alone), a map may be accessed by which you can keep track of your coordinates. Initially blank, information must be purchased or bases visited to register on the map. Unusually, displaying the map does not halt the action, but is superimposed over it. This often leads to your ship being unsuspectingly fired upon while routing your course.

The game allows you a free hand to roam through space, discovering various strategies, (such as involving yourself in battles, politics or mercenary activities), although it is inevitable that you will at some point dock with a base to replenish diminished resources or buy information to further your own causes. Any resources purchased rely on you shooting down ships to gain credits.

Each base you visit belongs to one of the two warring factions and entry depends very much upon your tactics. Shooting down a ship and then entering a base of the same faction can be somewhat hazardous! If the base in question acknowledges your docking beacon, you are dragged in by tractor beam (as opposed to the *Elite* docking system) when you may begin to converse. Conversation enables you to determine the nature of your location, which could be anything from a religious institution to a restaurant!

Attempting to offer a base credits belonging to the same faction or leaving without paying for services will result in your immediate rejection and attempted destruction, although it is possible to barter prices to a certain degree. Cash reserves are vital – charges are often incurred merely for landing, and even saving a game in progress costs credits! Occasionally however, it may be that a base divulges information useful to you, or even offers you the chance to run a mercenary errand against the opposition.

POLE POSITION

Traversing between Universes involves discovery of the Pole base. Once found, you must be successfully admitted before being spewed out into the adjoining Universe. Travel is limited to one direction however. Co-ordinates leading to the Pole base may be purchased. Alternatively you may be assisted by small creatures known as Wanderers who are quite willing to lead you to the Pole and whom you must protect from possible attack.

The "Simula" system creates an excellent deep space environment with incredibly fast, well designed graphics conveying as much realism as is possible in a completely unknown environment. Although the initial concept may smack of *Elite*, the option of a practice or "Raid" mode allows arcade freaks to blast to their hearts' content, whilst those looking for something more in-depth have a vast challenge on their hands.

Xiphos is an excellent example of a contemporary space trading game. Let's hope the Simula system is used to produce software of similar quality in the future.

● **Alex Ruranski**

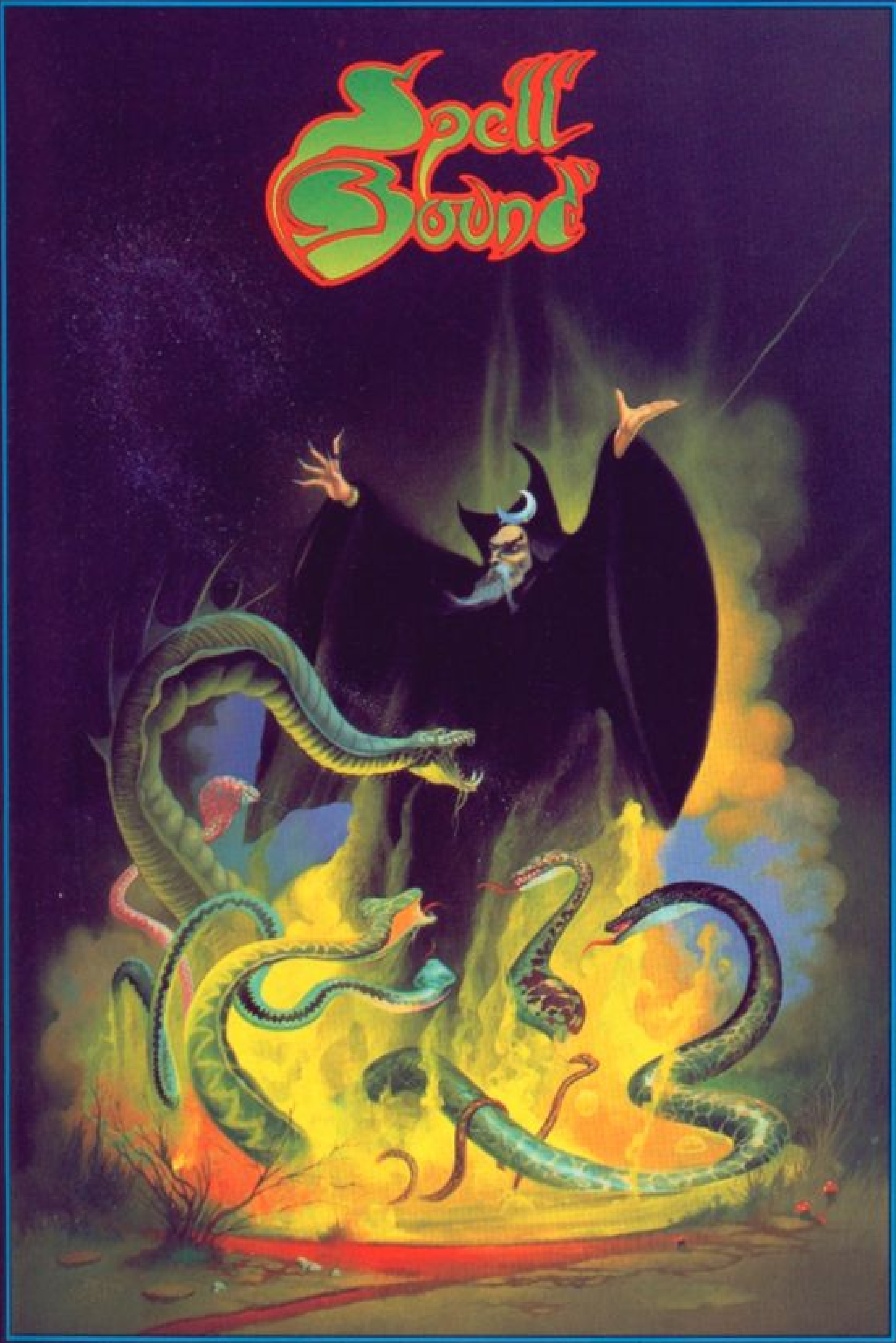
SPACE SIMULA

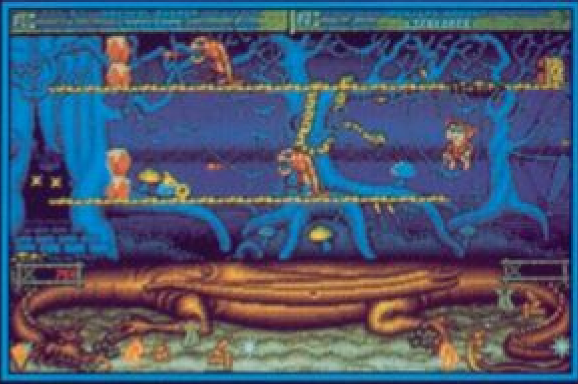
The system used to generate the impressively fast 3-D graphics (known as "Simula"), took around 2 years to develop. Being a C-based graphics-language, Simula allows artists with relatively little programming knowledge a free-hand to design and co-ordinate complex polygon-based graphics. SPA, the development team responsible for *Xiphos*, are confident that future releases will make use of the system, and that its possibilities far outweigh any other 3-D system so far.

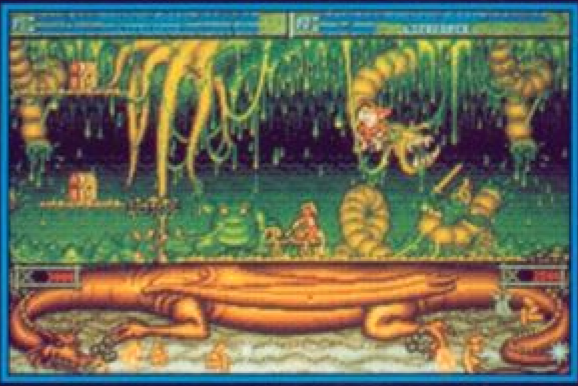
ELITE ON THE WANE?

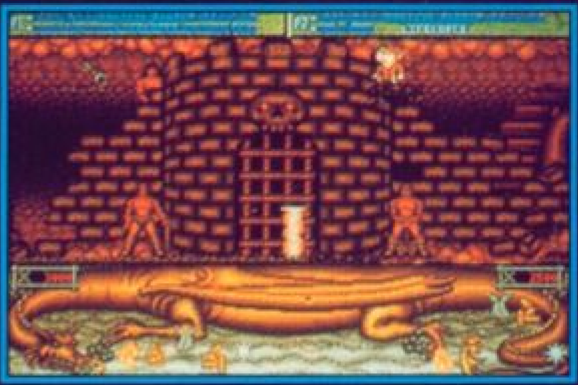
***Elite* generated a whole genre of space trading scenarios that has kept discriminating gamesters busy for several years. But can the formula survive?**

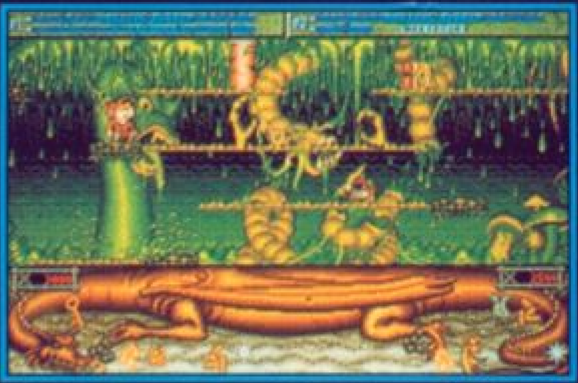
The problem lies in the increased competition from strategic games like *Populous* and *Powermonger* on the one hand and the growing complexity of conflict scenarios (eg *Midwinter*) on the other. The space trading genre has a lot of potential, but it needs to be taken into new areas of resource management and interaction if it is going to give us another game as influential as *Elite*.











Spellbound

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Screen Shots from the Atari ST

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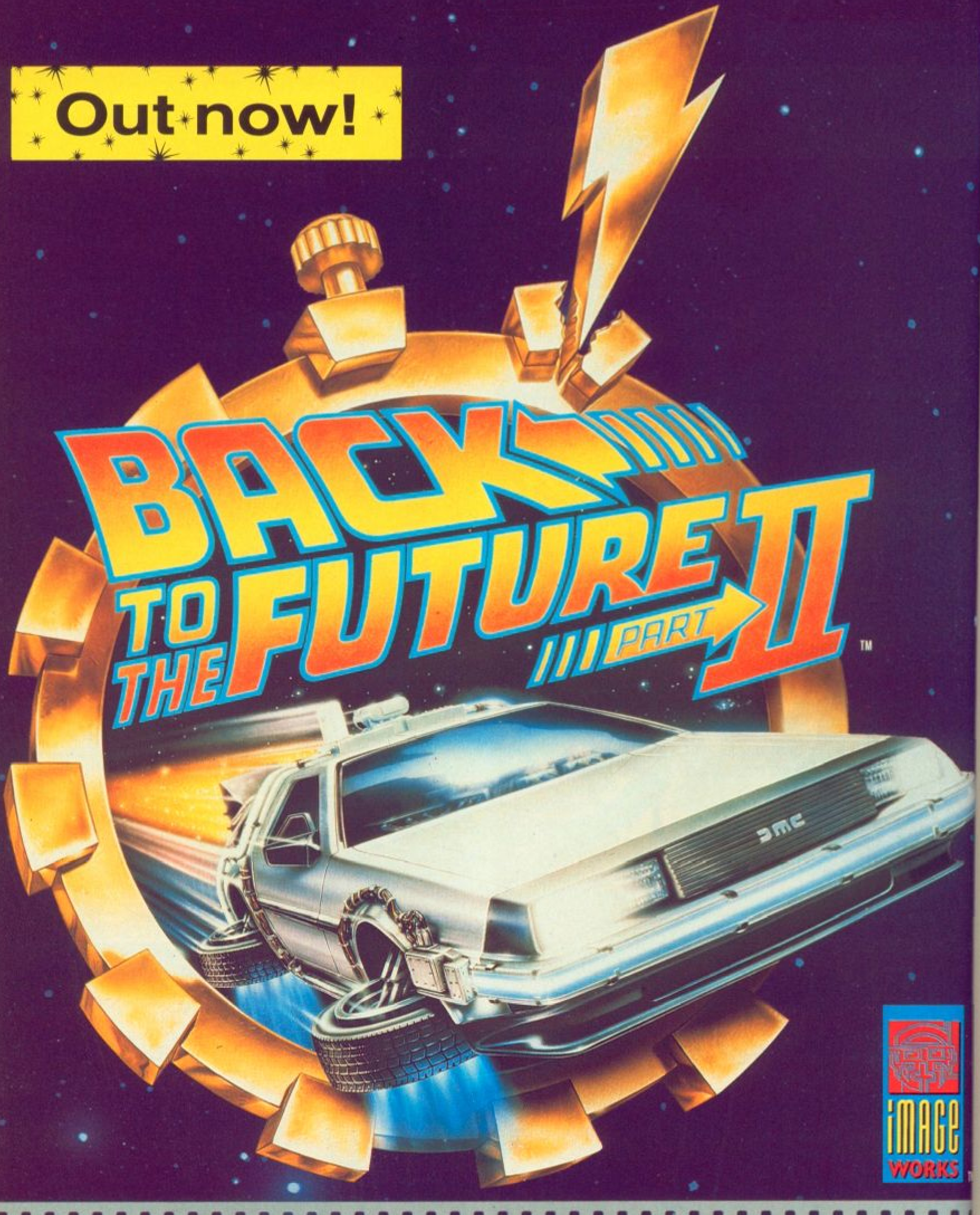
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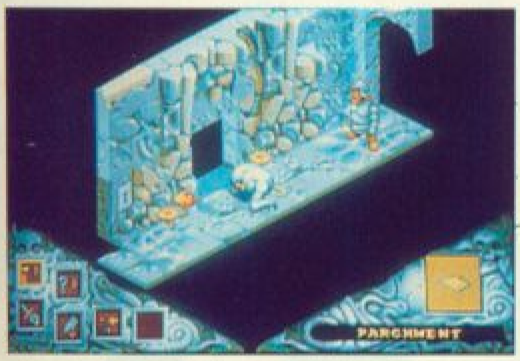
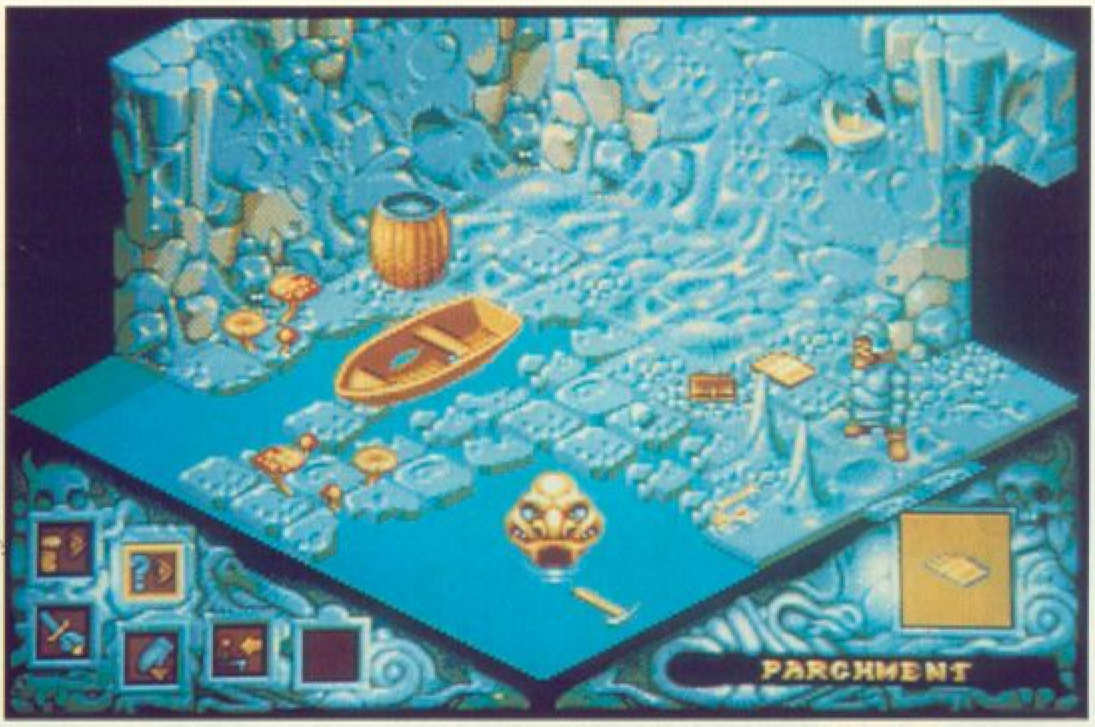
IMAGE WORKS, Irwin House, 118 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SW. Tel: 071-928 1454 **SCREENSHOTS:** Atari ST 4 & 5 Courtesy of MCA

Can *Cadaver* breathe new life into an old game-style? IMAGEWORKS and the Bitmaps follow up Zoo's *Treasure Trap* with another 16-bit isometric 3D adventure



At last! A monster to practise evasion routines with! Pity there aren't more...



Beautifully constructed screens include underwater lakes and pools from which arise occasional death-dealing monsters

CADAVER

Isometric adventures were big business on the 8-bits, with games such as *Head over Heels* and *Batman* leading the pack. The secret of their success was probably the fact that they appealed to just about everybody - there was pixel-precision jumping for platform freaks, monster blasting for arcade addicts and puzzles galore for adventurers.

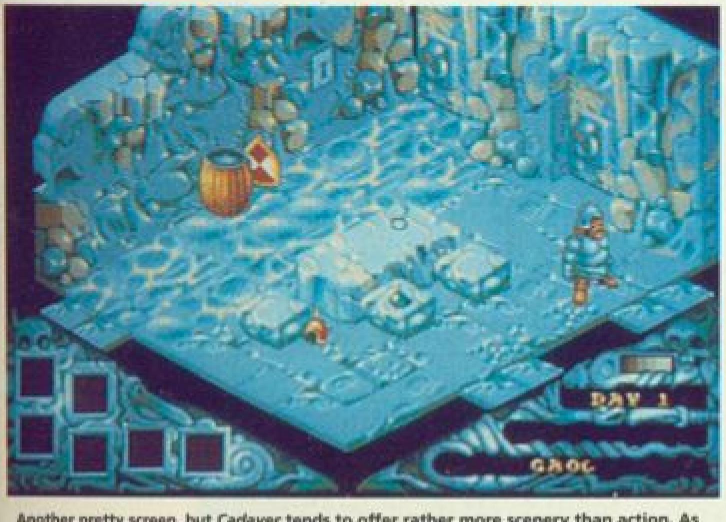
On the 16-bit machines, for reasons not entirely clear, there have been very few isometric titles (Zoo's recent *Treasure Trap* is one exception), so *Cadaver* comes as something of a curiosity, blending a feeling of deja vu with a sensation of excited rediscovery. It's credits are certainly impressive – you can't argue with the famous Bitmap Brothers – but can even this much hyped team breathe real magic into such an old genre?

The game starts with you, Karadoc the dwarf, standing by your boat at the entrance to the eerie Castle Wulf. Your mission isn't made clear in the instructions; you have to find it out along the way. This means your first couple of goes will demand a lot of exploration and experimentation to get you a rough idea of what you're supposed to be doing.

The object control method is much more complex than you'd expect if you've been brought up on games like *Knight Lore* and *Head Over Heels* – it consists of a group of icons at the base of the screen which roughly depict different actions (eg. drop, throw, etc.) You select the object you want to use from your rucksack and then whatever you want to do with it from the icon menu.

Graphics are everything you could want them to be – crisp, clear and colourful. The screen is beautifully designed, with everything falling into place just right. The sound effects are few and far between, but what's there is adequate.

The problem with *Cadaver* is that it seems to have lost a good deal of the appeal of the old 8-bit isometric games. That appeal was basically the degree of arcade action – jumping, dodging, and sometimes firing – and the puzzle element was effectively confined to small doses. The games were easy to get into and the screens were constantly alive with obstacles and opposition. A simple recipe, OK, but an effective one.



Another pretty screen, but *Cadaver* tends to offer rather more scenery than action. As you can see, there's not a lot of bouncing, bobbing, weaving opposition here

In *Cadaver*, however, although all the ingredients are still there, the balance has changed. You spend a lot of the time just walking around, picking things up, dropping them, and walking around again. Although still undeniably an arcade adventure, the emphasis is definitely on the latter.

There's no denying that this is going to be as polished a game as you're likely to get and there are hundreds of screens and lots of puzzles, but the isometric presentation of the game is slightly misleading. No jumping, dodging mayhem this, but more of a multi-screen puzzler. That will doubtless appeal to many, but personally I think the old recipe had more bounce.

● **Nick Baynes**

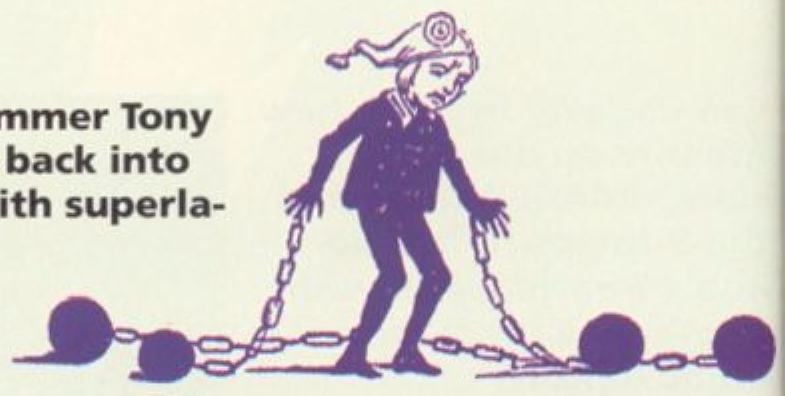
We only had the first two levels of *Cadaver* to play with, so the definitive ACE rating will have to wait. The beautiful presentation, however, hides a controversial product. There's certainly a lot here to keep you busy, but whether it's the business your looking for depends on your liking for puzzles and exploration rather than for

RELEASE DETAILS		
ATARI ST	£24.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£24.99	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£TBA	TO FOLLOW

No other versions planned

- Tremendous graphics
- Vast number of screens
- Unusual number of control options for the genre

- Definitely lacking in action Takes too long to get into



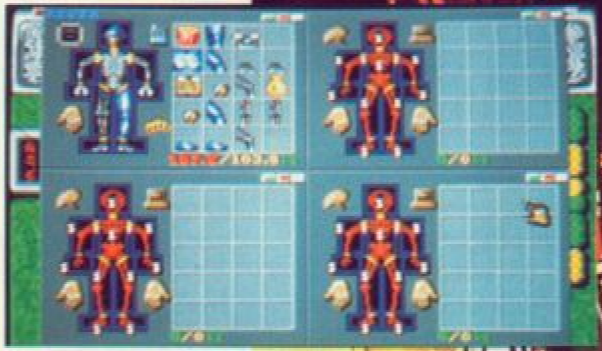
CAPTIVE

Veteran programmer Tony Crowther leaps back into the limelight with superlative space-age challenge for MINDSCAPE

Originally titled *Federation War* (but renamed *Captive* in a recent ACE competition) this excellent Tony Crowther epic places you in the confines of a huge orbiting fortress somewhere in the depths of space. You are there, not unreasonably, because you are the most evil man in the Galaxy.

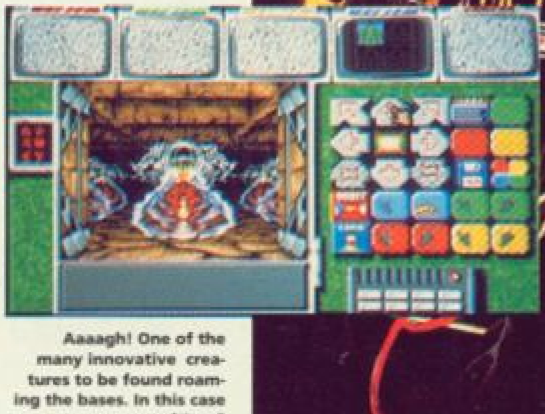
Having been cryogenically imprisoned for two hundred years, you are woken by a malfunction within the holding computer. With absolutely no idea where or who you are, you proceed to explore the outside world via four droids, controlled by you from a small computer contained in a briefcase (handy eh?).

Each droid comes in kit form and is fully interchangeable with the others, giving rise to various possible attribute configurations. Together the four units form a sort of RPG 'party' that you move about in battle formation. Under your remote control, your droid party must traverse the 10 bases holding the fortress in its orbit, destroying the power source in each and obtaining a spacecraft to transport the party to subsequent fortresses. Once all 10 bases have been shut down, you must fly the droids to the central fortress in an attempt to rescue yourself.



Build your own using a paperclip, toilet roll, glue... One of the many information screens within Captive, detailing a spot of vital spare-part surgery.

The opposition is plentiful and comes in a variety of forms, ranging from violent dwarves through mechanical tanks to dragons! Coming up against any adversary requires fast reflexes, thankfully catered for by the icon driven interface, which makes for easy control in any situation. The icons themselves are arranged into relevant clusters and most fulfil a dual function, depending on which mouse button is pressed. The left button initiates an action, whilst the right allows the player to access a special feature relevant to that icon. The most obvious of the controls is the movement cluster, moving



Aaaagh! One of the many innovative creatures to be found roaming the bases. In this case it's a ?

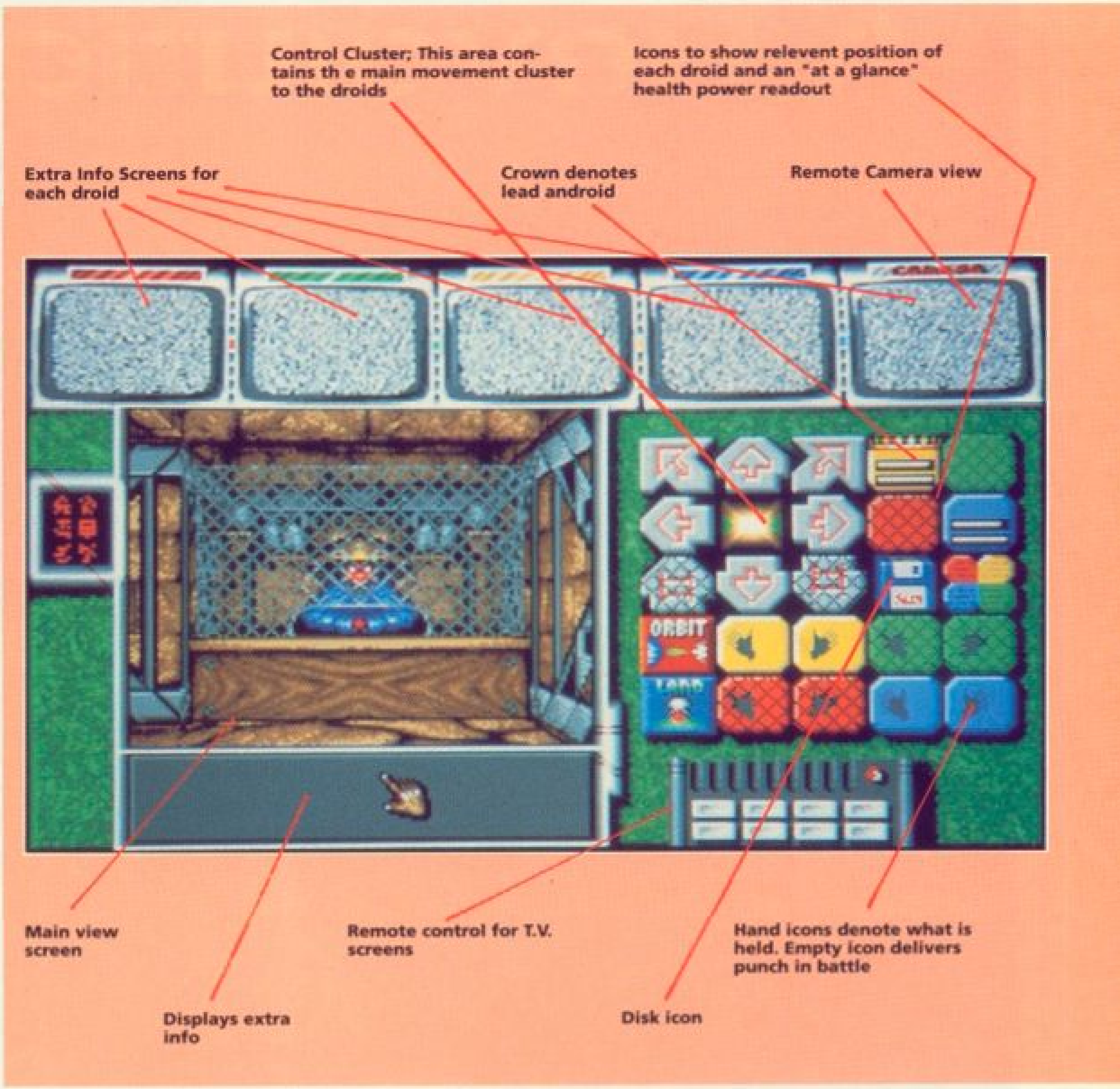
MINDSCAPE
MINDSCAPE
INTERNATIONAL

SYSTEM ARCHITECTURE

Once booted up, the first thing to hit you about *Captive* is its size: a staggering total of 5900 missions (64900 bases) to undertake

All this is possible because Tony Crowther has developed a new data generating and management system, called Architect, which means that each base is unique. The system also means that each time a level is complete, a new, higher level can be automatically preconstructed.

Architect adds variety of gameplay and environment to some excellent, bitmapped graphics in a distinctive style which suit the game well, enhancing the feel of each alien world. The various inhabitants of each planet have interesting movement characteristics and have been carefully designed to convey as much variety and originality as possible. Have *you* ever seen a fanged rampaging bush before?! Sound is represented in true, realtime stereo for that alien enhancing effect – it's a bit repetitive but that doesn't detract from the gameplay.


Control Cluster; This area contains th e main movement cluster to the droids
Icons to show relevent position of each droid and an "at a glance" health power readout
Extra Info Screens for each droid
Crown denotes lead android
Remote Camera view
Main view screen
Remote control for T.V. screens
Hand icons denote what is held. Empty icon delivers punch in battle
Displays extra info
Disk icon

each droid in battle formation. This control also allows you to rotate your droid, giving you a view of your immediate surroundings whilst remaining in one spot.

Each droid may be moved around within the formation by clicking on two separate droid icons whereupon they will swap places. The lead droid is denoted by a crown on his position icon, (to the right of the control cluster), which also shows a simplified health and power reading and allows any droid to be promoted to leader simply by double-clicking the icon.

Information on general health and the contents of each droid backpack may also be gained from this icon. It is from here that the droids may be modified – objects and even limbs may be exchanged. Other important icons include the multi-droid icon, (allowing the player to view the statistics of all droids at once) the hand icons (for allocating,swapping and using objects) and the disk icon, which allows the player to load or save a game in progress.

DUNGEON MASTERY

The majority of the screen is devoted to the main viewing area, where the action is displayed in first person perspective (using a similar 3-D style to that seen in *Dungeon Master*). Your location is viewed through the eyes of the leading droid – in the event of its demise the screen blacks out.

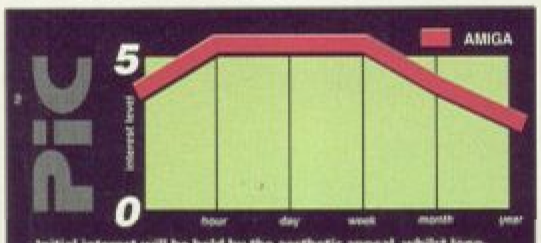
Battle against enemies is carried out by clicking on a droid's hand icon to administer a punch (if empty handed) or a blast from the current weapon held. In typical skill-based RPG style, different droids have different degrees of proficiency in using the various weapons.

When creatures die, they may leave objects to be picked up, such as more weapons or money. Battles often lead to injuries, whereupon you wander around until you find a shop where any spare cash may be spent on armoury, useful extras or repairs to damaged droids. Above the main play-area are five screens displaying extra information, such as local environment or even a sneak peek to spot danger, using a remote camera which may be purchased from one of the shops.

◄ John Pierre Trevor, responsible for the Captive artwork - also credited with design for Batman, Star Wars and Herbie.

Fans of *Dungeon Master* will find *Captive* an essential buy, combining the elements which made the former so successful, and adding the ability to control and modify four different droids (and save them for later use), giving the game a further element of strategy whilst retaining all the speed and action of an arcade game. For those with a less than strategic inclination, *Captive* will still prove exciting due to its large number of possibilities. It's also far from easy to complete, providing many hours of intriguing gameplay.

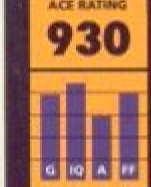
● ***Alex Ruranski***



Initial interest will be held by the aesthetic appeal, whilst long-term interest will be held by the sheer size and complexity of the game, as well as the ability to improve your resources and save them for later use. A must.

ACE RATING

930



AMIGA

The Amiga version of Captive bodes extremely well for those versions to follow. Well planned, atmospheric graphics provide exactly the right environment and join with true stereo sound to give an accurate representation of the whereabouts of aliens. Captive looks set to become as successful as *Dungeon Master* – and what's more, it doesn't require one meg!

RELEASE DETAILS

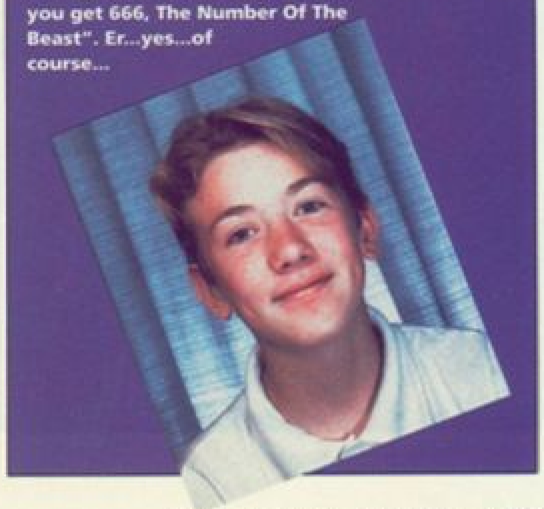
ATARI ST/STE	£24.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£24.99	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£29.99	IMMINENT

No other versions planned

YOU NAMED THAT GAME!

Captive started life as *Project X* and we asked ACE readers to enter the ACE Name the Game competition and christen it. The winner is John Millward from Dudley, West Midlands. His suggestion was, of course, CAPTIVE and he's won himself a Gameboy and Mindscape software. Not only that, but Mindscape have agreed to credit John in the game itself.

The two runners-up (who also receive Gameboys) are Mark Hughes from Glossop in Derbyshire, who suggested "The C.A.L.L.E.D" (The Cryogenic Awakening Lost Logic Emphatic Droids) and Andrew Pike from Eccles in Manchester, who put forward "Escape from (Galacto) Cryo-Crypt 248c/418 serious"! Andrew then goes on to say that "if you add 248 and 418 you get 666, The Number Of The Beast". Er...yes...of course...



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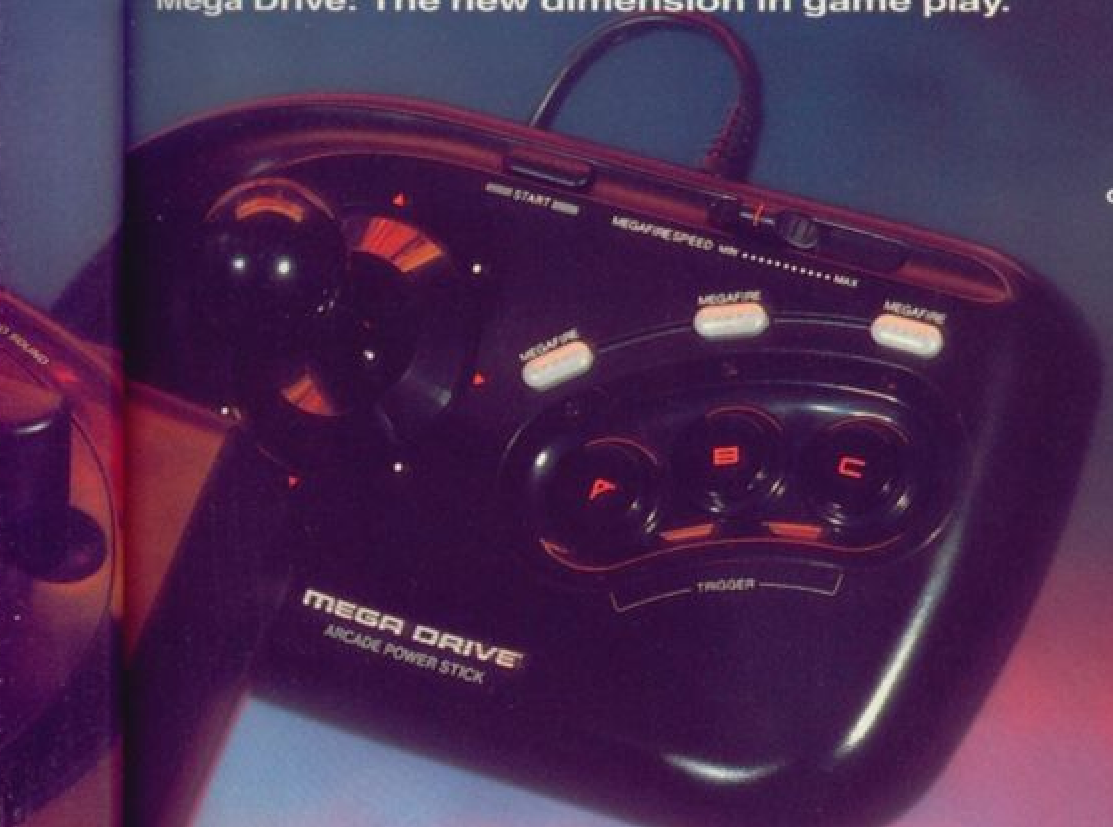
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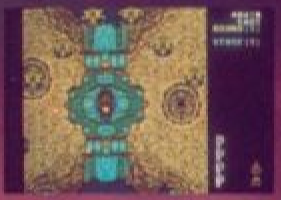
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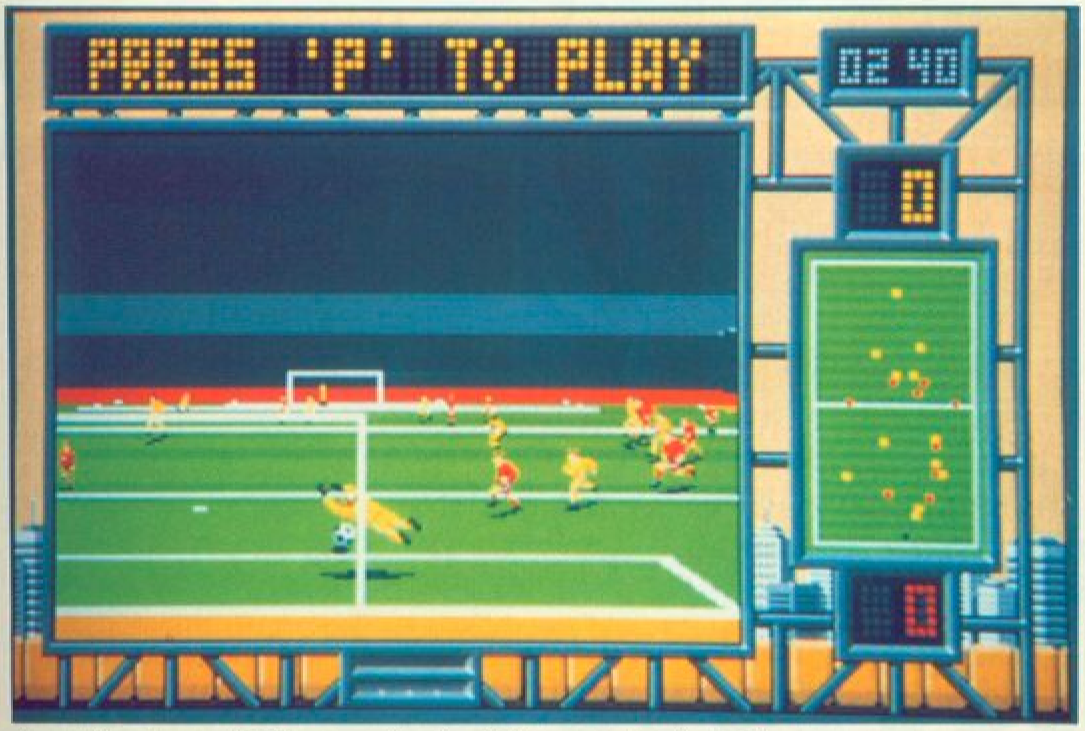
INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHALLENGE

Just as you thought the season for "footie" games was over with the end of the World Cup, MICROPROSE release what they call 'the most accurate simulation of football seen on the screen'



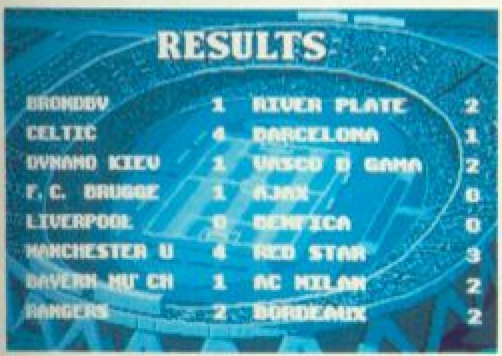
Your goalie leaps to save a shot...The movements are beautifully programmed and animated

The first thing you notice is the viewpoint. Most games have the usual top-down view or, in the case of *Kick Off*, from directly above. Microprose however have opted for one at eye-level.

The effect is extremely attractive, especially when combined with excellent player movement (surely the best ever).

The player under your control is indicated with a white arrow, but unfortunately the attractive display method makes gameplay difficult. The amount of pitch shown on the screen is comparatively small, so when the opposition have the ball you usually have to direct off-screen players in for a tackle, which is extremely difficult. And, of course, the computer is bringing in off-screen players too, so you often lose possession to players who have only just materialised. There's a pitch radar screen which helps, but to play effectively you have to spend more time looking at this than the actual screen.

Presentation is very impressive with smooth animation and nice colours. As in a lot of footie games these days there is the digital scoreboard with a "Mr Men" like character that either congratulates or commiserates depending on who scored. Another nice touch are the pictures of the Ref and the Linemen which appear with fouls and throw-ons. Sound effects are the usual cheers and whistles along with some nice tunes here and there.



RESULTS

BRONDBY	1	RIVER PLATE	2
CELTIC	4	BARCELONA	1
DYNAMO KIEV	1	VASCO D GAMA	2
F. C. BRUGGE	1	AJAX	0
LIVERPOOL	0	BENFICA	0
MANCHESTER U	4	RED STAR	3
BAYERN MU'CH	1	AC MILAN	2
RANGERS	2	BORDEAUX	2

One of the neat aspects of the presentation, a digitised shot of the stadium after the game

The passing system is oe of the game's strong points, however. The fire button controls power, left and right movements the swerve, and vertical movements the height. The power bar is split into four blocks,with each one representing an increasing degree of power. Height and swerve are adjusted while the fire button is pressed so unless your going for a full powered boot you'll need to be quick.

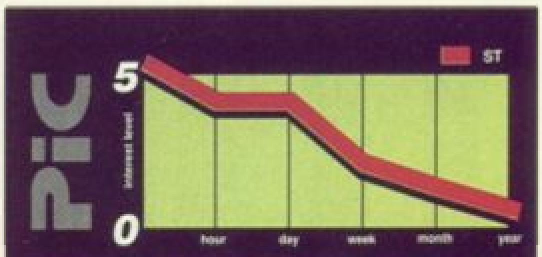
The Goalie is controlled by computer except in penalties. It's for this reason alone that I didn't get thrashed 10-1 by the computer. There are 3 skill levels: Easy, where unless your passes are totally off they always find their mark. Intermediate, in which the ball is semi-intelligent, and Advanced in which you have to do all the work yourself.

In the actual game you have the choice of either World Cup or Superleague in which the best clubs around the world square off with one another. Apart from these the only other things you can do are to practice passes, penalties, etc. Although you can choose your team, you can't choose formation or the players you want, losing the World Cup feel that, for example, *Italy 1990* had.

The worst thing however is the lack of a two player option which has to be the most important thing after playability, because, in almost every case, playing with or against someone is infinitely more enjoyable than doing the same with a computer.

Microprose are renowned for their excellent flight sims. Perhaps that's why this product seems to have veered a little too far towards 'reality' – computer footie needs to be a game first and a simulation second.

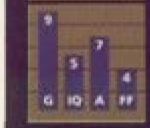
● **Khalid Howlader**



Great graphics with some nice tunes instantly impress, holding your attention. Then the drawbacks of the game become all too apparent – once the computer gets the ball it's very hard to get it back! Unfortunately, for the average player, persistence is not going to improve the scores. Lack of match options (eg pitch, formation) and no two player option seals its fate.

ACE RATING

705



ATARI ST

The graphics are very impressive with fluid animation and an unusual viewpoint. Sound is nothing spectacular but it doesn't detract from the game. The passing system is easy to get to grips with but otherwise it seems that Microprose have concentrated too much on accuracy and animation at the expense of playability.

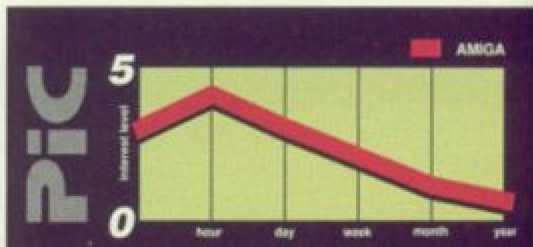
RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£TBA	TBA
AMIGA	£TBA	TBA
IBM PC	£TBA	TBA

No other versions planned

TORVAK THE WARRIOR

The team that brough you the excellent *Rick Dangerous* go hacking and slaying with CORE DESIGN



Initial frustration at the sluggish control is somewhat overcome as timing is mastered. However, gameplay soon becomes tedious and is far from helped by below par graphics and sound. Considering Core have been responsible for the superb *Rick Dangerous* and (to be reviewed next month) *Rick Dangerous 2*, *Torvak The Warrior* leaves us wondering.

ACE RATING
650

G	IQ	A	FF
5	4	4	4

AMIGA

By no means uses the Amiga to its full potential. The sound is OK, but ranges between the uninspired and the inappropriate. The graphics are disappointing and the gameplay uneven. Even if your determination to get hacking and slaying runs high, try *Torvak* first hand or look elsewhere.

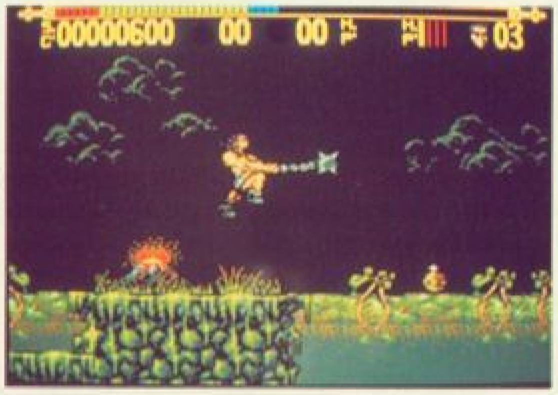
RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£24.99	IMMINENT

No other versions planned

Remember Conan? So do Core Design, whose latest release *Torvak The Warrior* bears a striking resemblance to the story of said sword-wielding maestro.

Following a five year self-imposed exile, Torvak returns to his homeland Ragnor, ravaged beyond recognition in the bloody Tormanian wars.

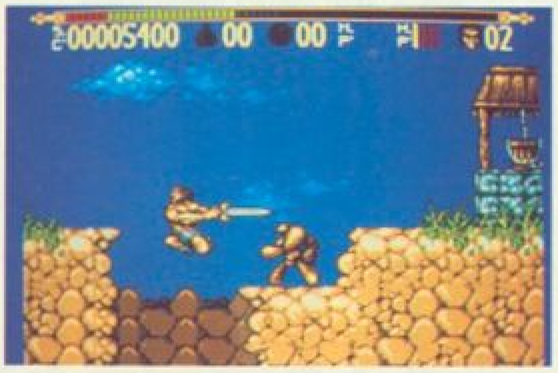


Torvie baby leaps into a marsh, wielding his morningstar, and going for treasure

Having reached the outskirts of the once thriving village, he is startled by a voice emanating from the now twisted figure of 'The Elder', who informs Torvak of the arrival of the Necromancer and the darkness he has brought to bear. Instinctively, Torvak now knows the path he must take – a career in carvery as a hacking, slaying sprite.

Initially armed with a double-handed axe, you must guide Torvak through the five levels comprising his homeland until coming face to face with the Necromancer, whom you must then dispatch. Each level is distinctive, increasing in difficulty, beginning with Torvak's ravaged village and progressing through the swamp to the mountains and into the jungle, after which you must negotiate the Necromancer's castle.

Particular types of enemies (including Orcs, Piranhas, Scorpions, Warriors, Spiders and killer Porcupines!) are specific to each level and have distinctive attacking methods, each of which must obviously be dealt with in a specific way. Levels also include some underground sequences, accessed via holes in the ground, but including the same hostiles.



Our hero is about to leap down a hole to a lower section, escaping that stone-faced Rockman in the process

Attacking an enemy may be achieved using 3 combinations of joystick movement and fire-button, in addition to which Torvak may find and cast spells. These are, in effect, magical versions of the 4 possible physical weapons – the default axe, a sword, a hammer and a morningstar.

Throughout each level, destroying certain parts of the scenery releases bonus items such as armour (for limited protection), food (to replenish energy) and treasure. In addition to these more basic items, you may also come across special bonuses such as Speed Up, decreasing Torvak's reaction time; Extend, adding extra units to the maximum energy allowed, and Power Up. The last of these bestows Torvak with greater hit power against adversaries and, when coupled with Speed Up, gives you a good idea of what Bruce Lee would have been like playing Rambo. Each item collected is displayed above the main playing area in the status window.

Progressing to the end of a level brings Torvak into confrontation with the obliga-tory guardian. These increase in difficulty and include a Stag, a Gryphon and a Serpent until, at the end of the game, you encounter the Necromancer.

Plot aside, having booted up *Torvak* you're faced with what appears to be a very run-of-the-mill hack'n'slay game in the same vein as the age-old *Rastan Saga*. The other immediately inescapable fact is that *Torvak* can be extremely frustrating. The slow initial speed of the main sprite hampers the gameplay and lowers the interest level.

Just some of the ugly critters you'll have to carbonado during your hacking, slaying, slicing, dicing derring-do

Once used to the sluggish control, however, timing begins to improve along with gameplay and progression. Each level is of considerable length and the extras to be found are a welcome addition to character performance and keep you persevering in a game that would otherwise lose interest fairly quickly.

On the visual side, *Torvak* suffers somewhat. Although the sprites have all been well designed, colour and animation appear to have been lost along the way, both falling far short of what a 16-bit machine is capable of. Backgrounds are both lacklustre and repetitive, with a non-parallax horizontal scroll and very little detail.

Sonically, FX are limited to the statutory grunt and swish noises associated with hack'n'slay games, and the soundtracks that are present would seem somehow better suited to a race game!

A challenge, certainly, but the determination is as much to overcome the unresponsive control as it is to succeed and enjoy. Definitely a game for devout barbarian fans only.

● **Alex Ruranski**

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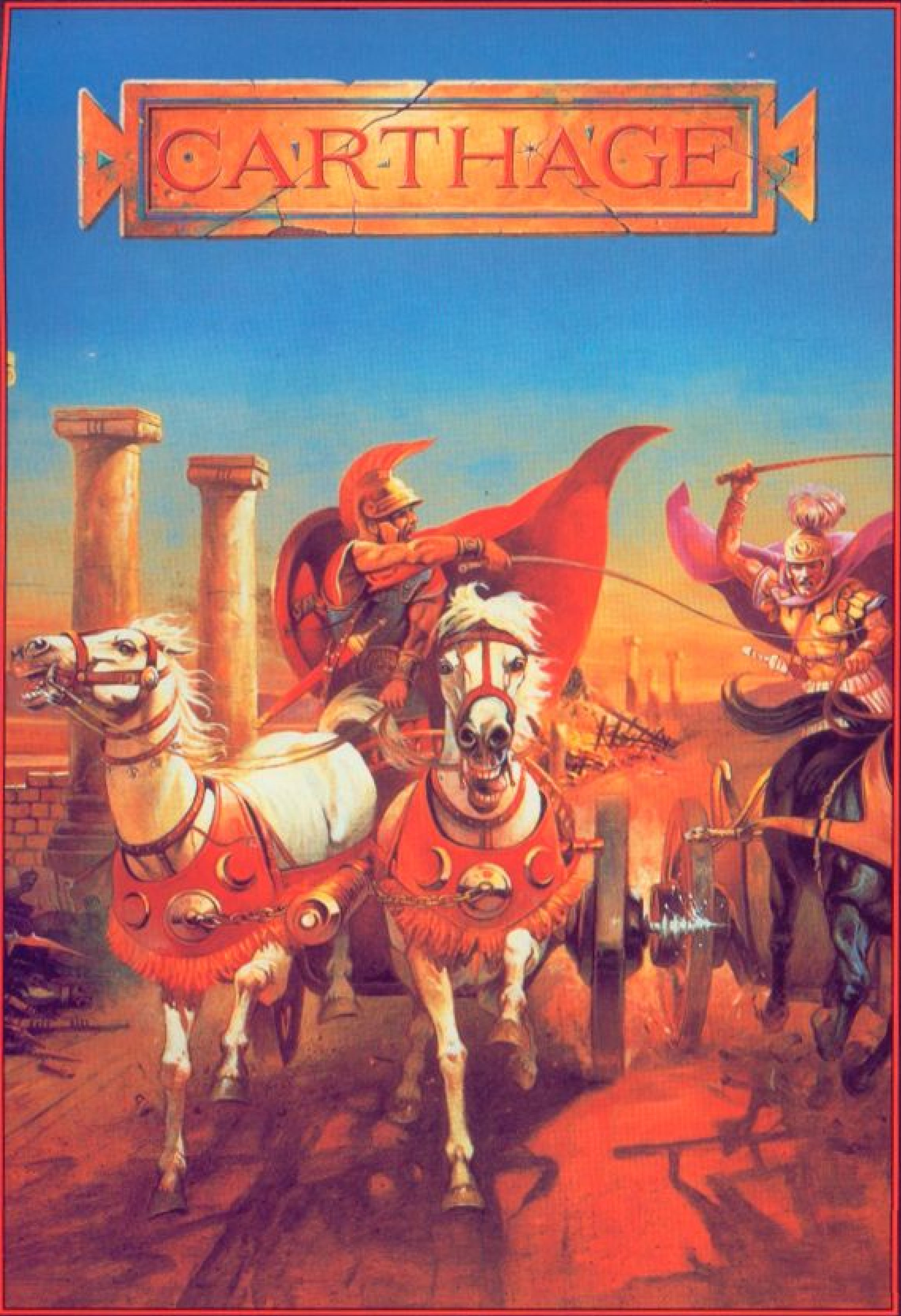

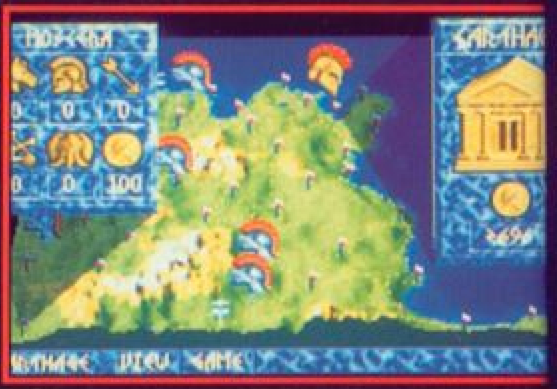

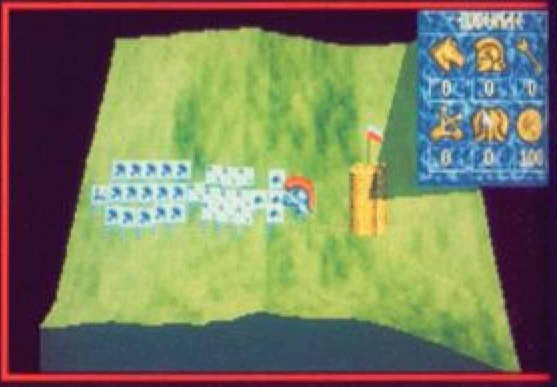

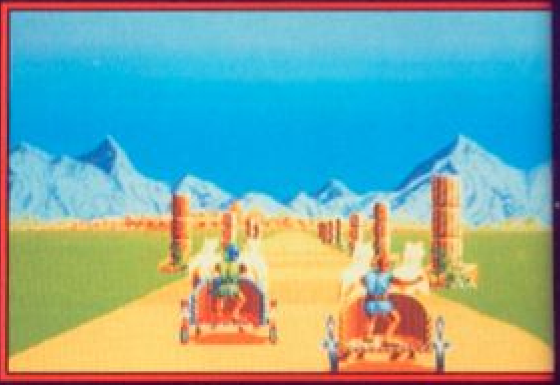

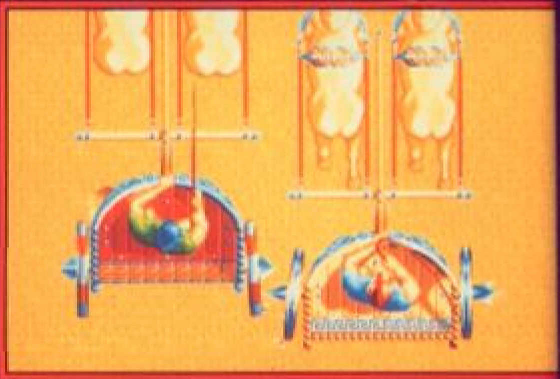

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Screen shots from the Amiga

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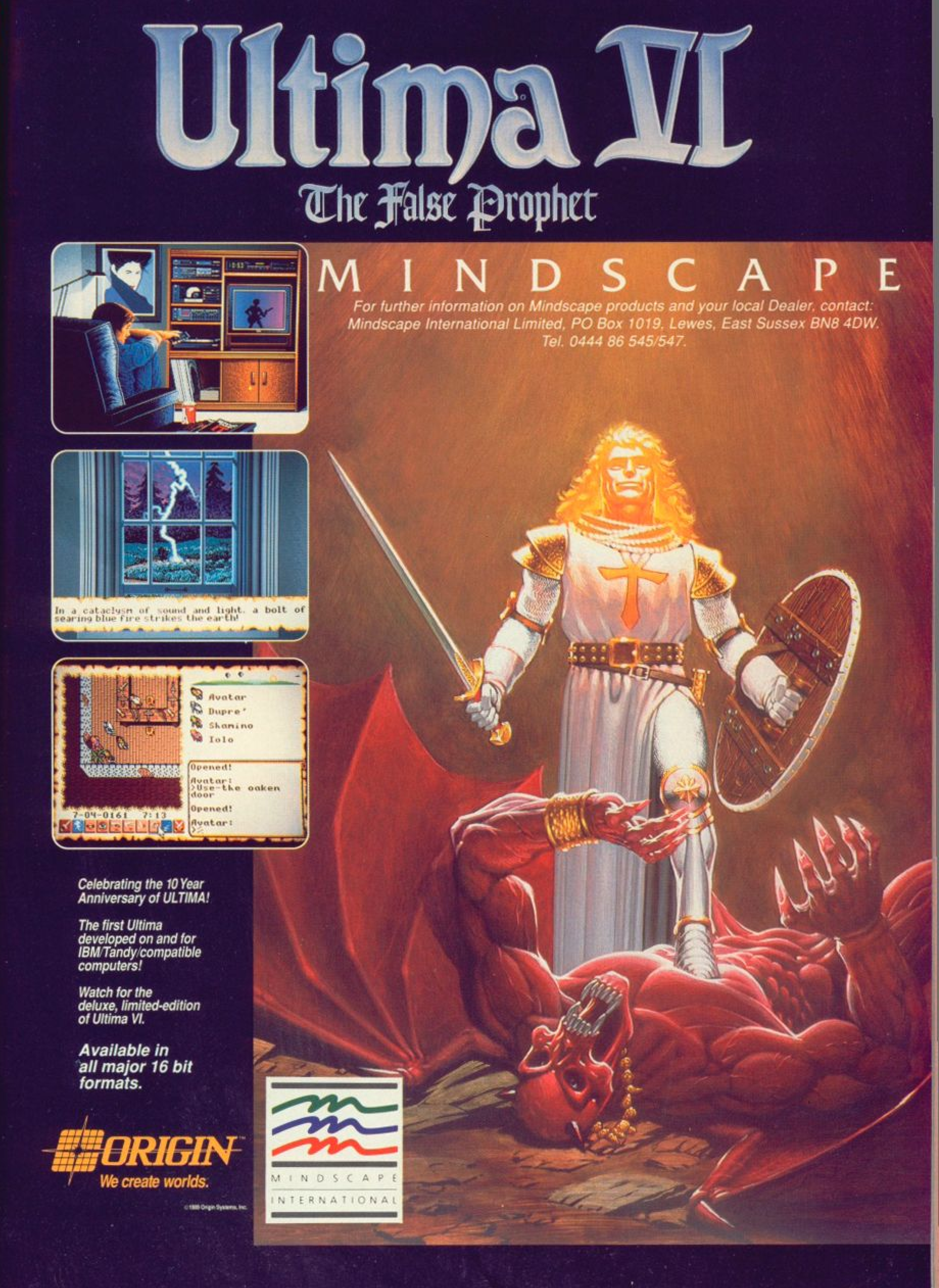

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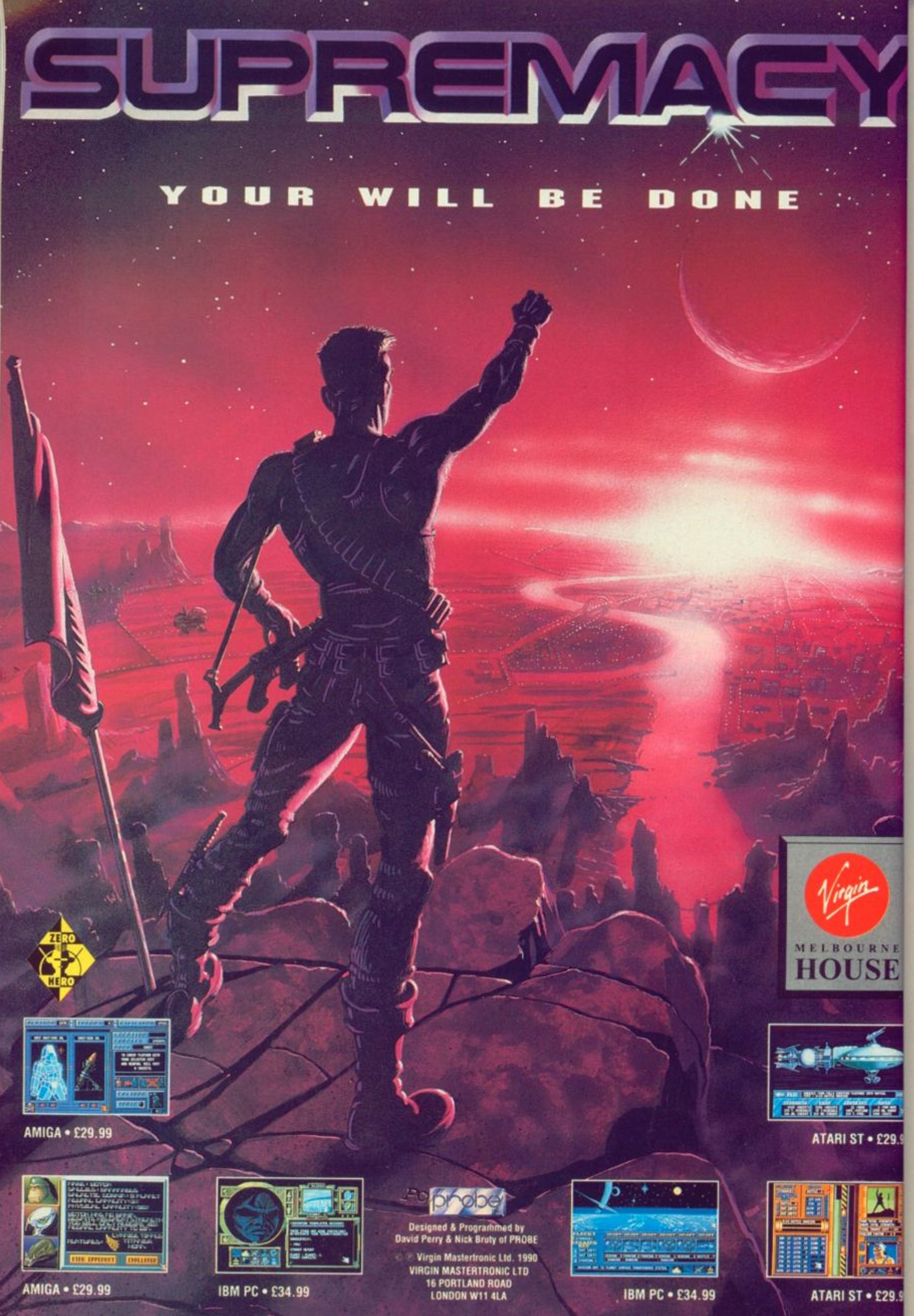

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DRAGONFLIGHT

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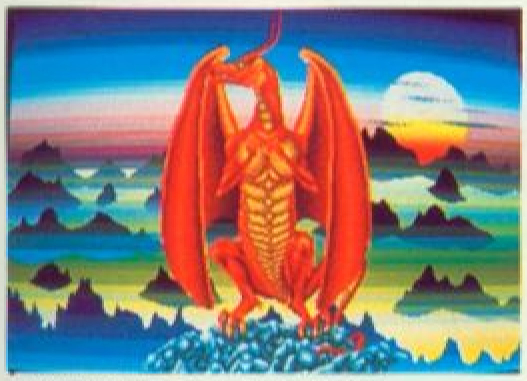


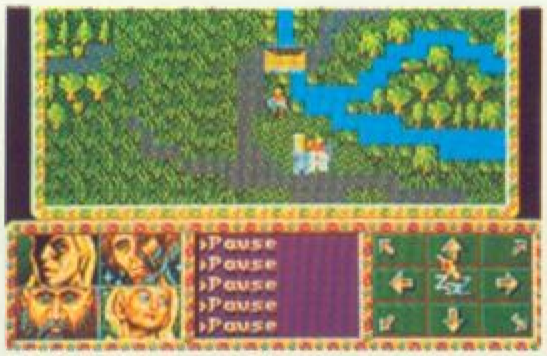
I'll huff and I'll puff - The excellently animated opening sequence from DRAGONFLIGHT

RELEASE DETAILS		
ATARI ST	£29.99dk	Early Sept
AMIGA	£29.99dk	Early Sept
No other versions planned		

In the traditional mould of the role-playing game, Thalion Software, previously known for such games as *Seven Gates Of Jambala* and *Chambers Of Shaolin*, now bring you *Dragonflight*, a quest to reinstate magic and discover the fate of the dragons, now disappeared but once prolific within the land of Pegana.

Incorporating all the aspects that RPG fans have come to appreciate, *Dragonflight* promises to include real game depth, atmospheric sound and stunning graphics together with numerous animated sequences (including battle scenes) of very high quality. Taking control of a party of 4 characters – now almost standard within any fantasy RPG (warrior, magic user, dwarf and elf) – *Dragonflight leads* you through 10 dungeons with up to 14 levels displayed in the first person perspective and through 12 cities and villages.

Interaction is of course vital and to this end there are dozens of free-roaming independent characters whom you must associate with in the event of success. As well as presenting the player with an extensive system of spells, *Dragonflight* incorporates more than 150 useable items such as weapons, potions, clothes and scrolls. Presentation comes in the form of a lengthy, illustrated novella (describing plot and detailing instructions), sticker and poster.



Beards 'n Bimbos - any one of these four characters are fully at your disposal

All in all, 2.5 megabytes of data have been used to bring you an RPG of what looks like the highest quality. Don't miss the full review of *Dragonflight* in the next issue...

• Alex Ruranski

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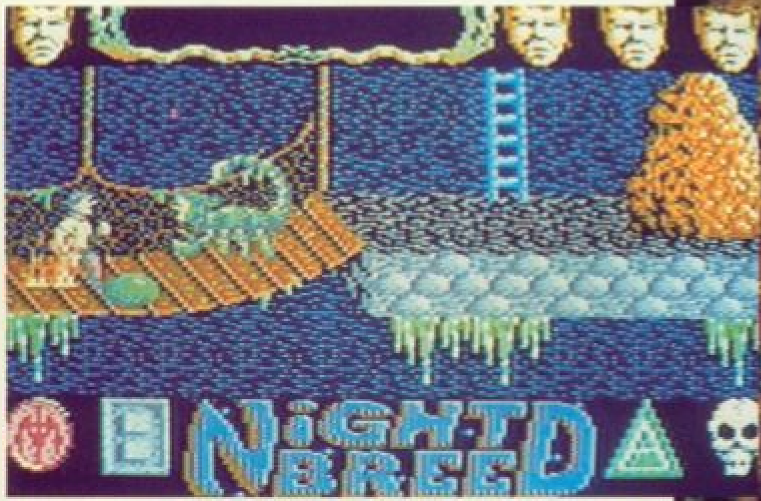
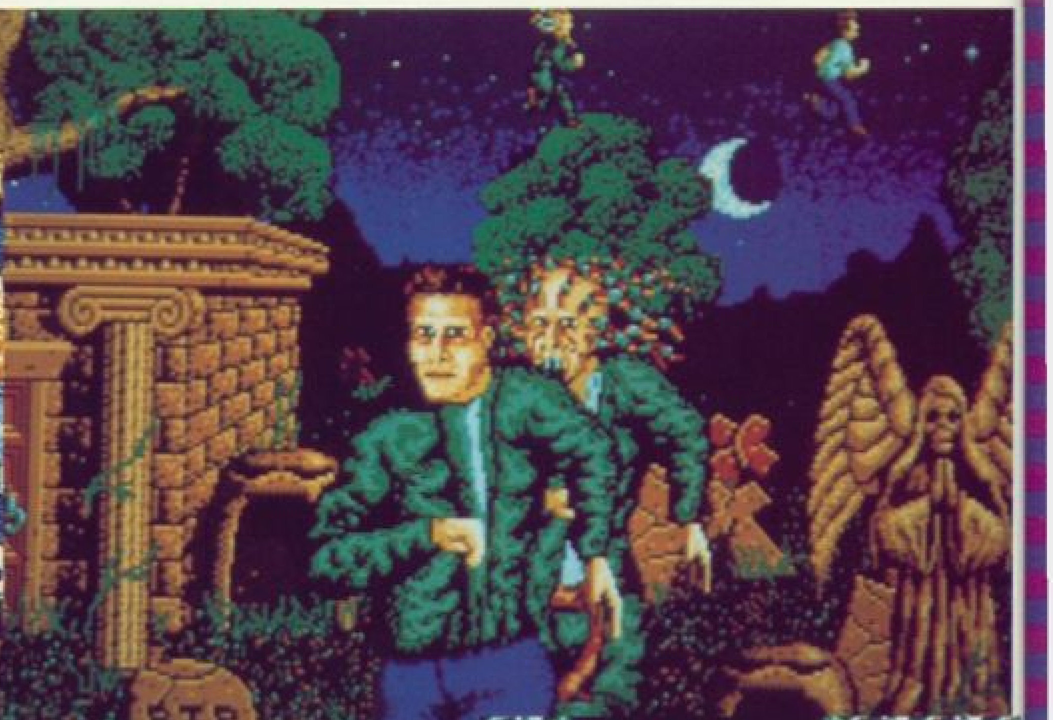
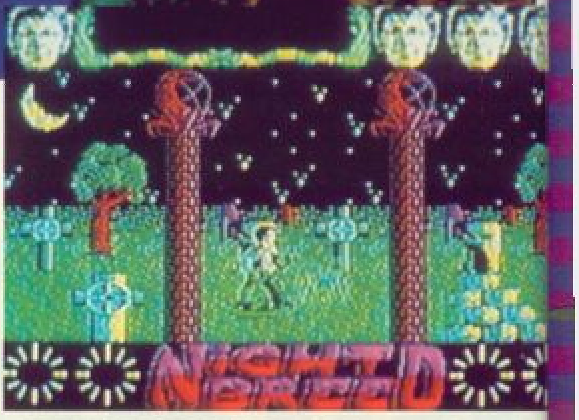


NIGHTBREED – ARCADE GAME on the C64. All six versions of the arcade game took six months to develop.



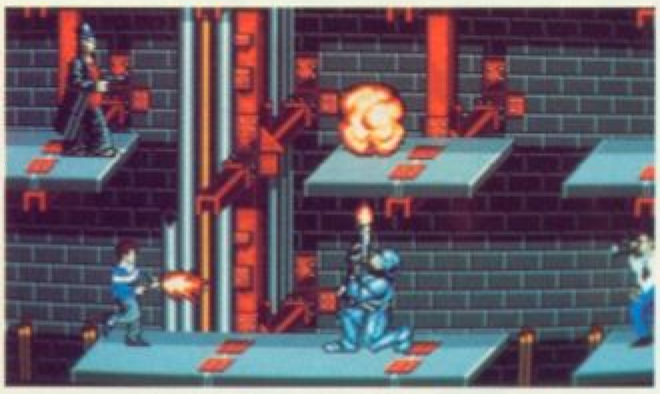
NIGHTBREED – INTERACTIVE MOVIE. Trying to outrun Peloquin, a ferocious and hungry Nightbreed cannibal. After all, you're only meat.



NIGHTBREED – ARCADE GAME. Even the Spectrum specters are scary!

Two tense tales of terror from OCEAN

NIGHTBREED



ROBOCOP 2. The sequel to the UK's best-selling computer game of 1989 is currently being developed on the Spectrum, C64, CPC console, Amiga, ST and Nintendo Entertainment System. It features eight levels of play including shooting gallery's, plus heat-seeking missile and thermograph accessories for our chrome-boy. Out in November.

Clive Barker's latest horror movie has inspired the chart-topping Manchester software house to develop two games based on the film: *Nightbreed – The Interactive Movie* (Amiga, ST, PC) and *Nightbreed – The Arcade Game* (Spectrum, C64, Amiga, ST, CPC, PC). Both games have been written by Painting by Numbers, a Sheffield-based software development team.

"We liaised closely with Clive Barker and visited Pinewood Studios while the *Nightbreed* movie was being made," states Mike Rogers, one of the directors at Painting by Numbers and co-programmer of the *Nightbreed* computer games.

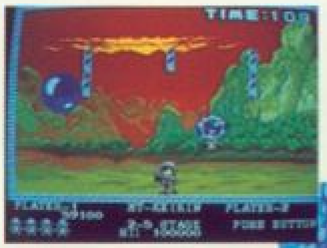
Clive Barker is a prolific British horror writer whose previous work includes *Hellraiser* and the *Books of Blood* short stories. Unlike many professional authors, he was very keen to have an input in game design. Rogers confirms, "The game is closer to the original book than the movie".

The book, movie, game plot centers around the Midian, a strange underworld populated by mysterious creatures, ghastly mutants and other eerie fairy-folk. The hero is drawn into this twilight zone, unaware that he holds the key to its future survival. You play that ill-prepared hero.

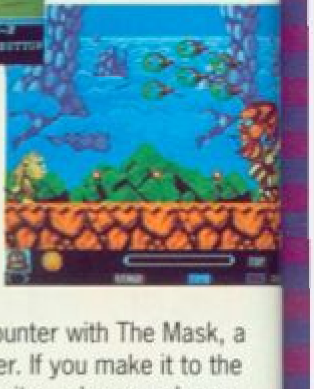
Nightbreed – The Arcade game is a traditional arcade adventure, while *Nightbreed – The Interactive Movie* hits Cinemaware games head-on. It's a mixture of attractive 'splash' intro screens and various mini-arcade sequences with you either killing or dodging approximately 40 Nightbreed creatures.

Play begins with you driving a car around the outskirts of town via an overhead map display. If you manage to avoid the local asylum and police roadblocks, you're chased through a graveyard by a hungry cannibal called Peloquin. A quick burst on the mouse button gets you through this ordeal and onto the encounter with The Mask, a nasty knife-throwing nutter. If you make it to the Midian you must navigate its underground complex and chasms in an effort to meet Baphomet, the master Nightbreeder. As Rogers puts it, "Discovery is the best part of the 'Interactive Movie' game". Look out for the *Nightbreed* movie and games as you read this.

● **Rik Haynes**



▼TOKI. Ocean in France is converting this strange Tad Corp cute platform-scrolling coin-op. Out on the major micros in the autumn.



▲PANG. This conversion of the cute Mitchell coin-op is being handled by Ocean's French connection. Be careful when someone bursts your bubbles! Coming to a computer near you this autumn.

PAINTING BY NUMBERS

The two *Nightbreed* games were programmed for Ocean by Painting by Numbers, a group of two programmers and two graphic artists: Mike Rogers, Chris Kerry, Stephen Kerry and John Beard. These experienced ex-Gremlin guys have written loads of games in the past eight years including *Thing on a Spring, Monty Mole, Way of the Tiger, Frak 64!, Jack and the Beanstalk* and *Run the Gauntlet*. They've handled all nine versions of the *Nightbreed Interactive Movie and Arcade Game.*

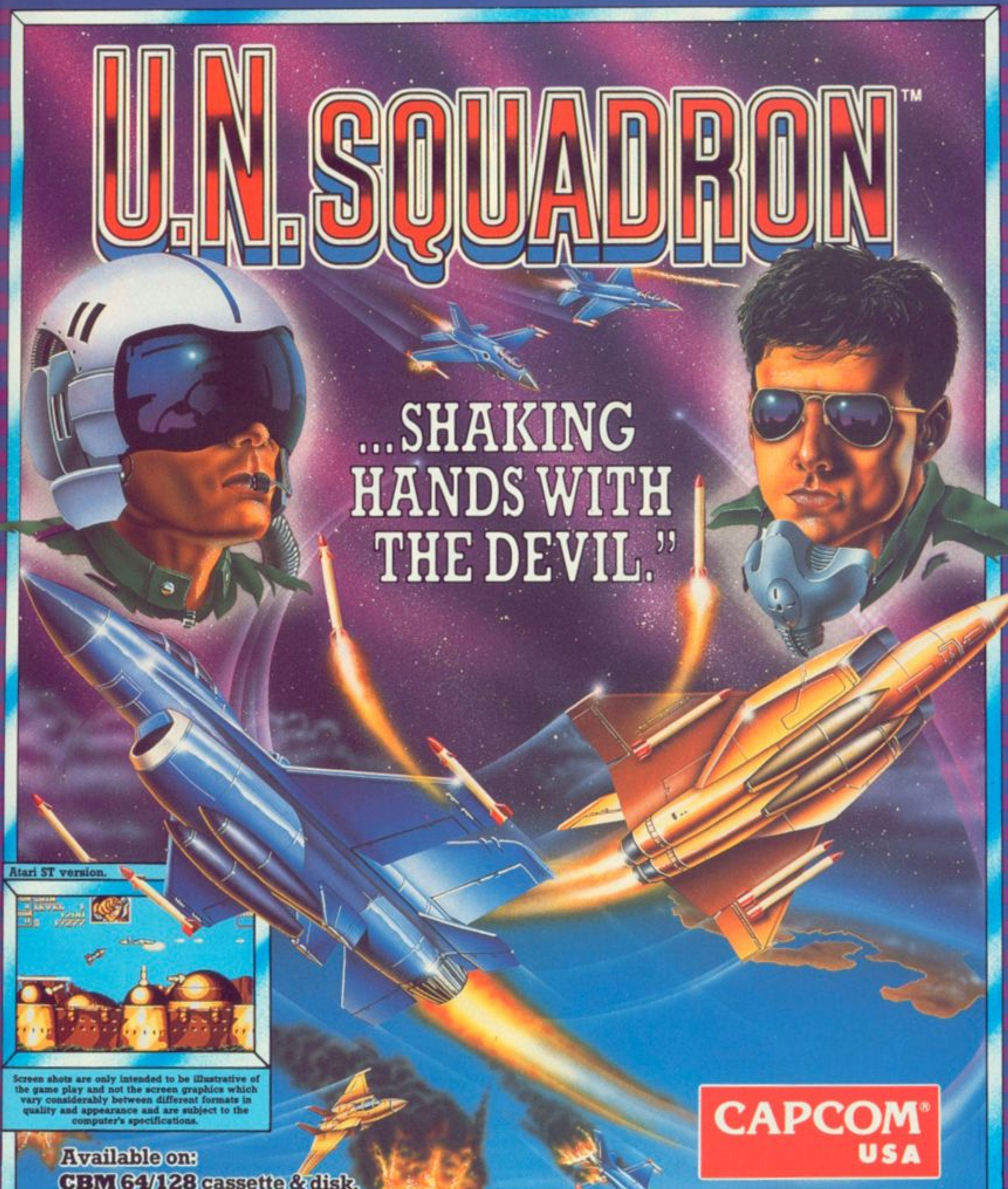
"We were part of the Gremlin stable from 1984-88 but we eventually wanted some freedom to do our own thing," says Rogers.

So what was the hardest thing to program in the *Nightbreed* games? "Fitting all 4Mb of data into the Interactive Movie was probably the most difficult achievement. Writing code is like building a pyramid – you have to get the base exactly right otherwise the whole thing topples down around you."

- Multiple arcade sequences.
- Four megabytes of graphics data.
- Faithful to the Nightbreed film.

- Boring map movement.
- Disappointing audio.

"FLYING THIS MISSION IS LIKE...



Atari ST version.

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computer's specifications.

Available on:
CBM 64/128 cassette & disk.
Amstrad cassette & disk.
Spectrum 48/128K cassette.
CBM Amiga.
Atari ST.

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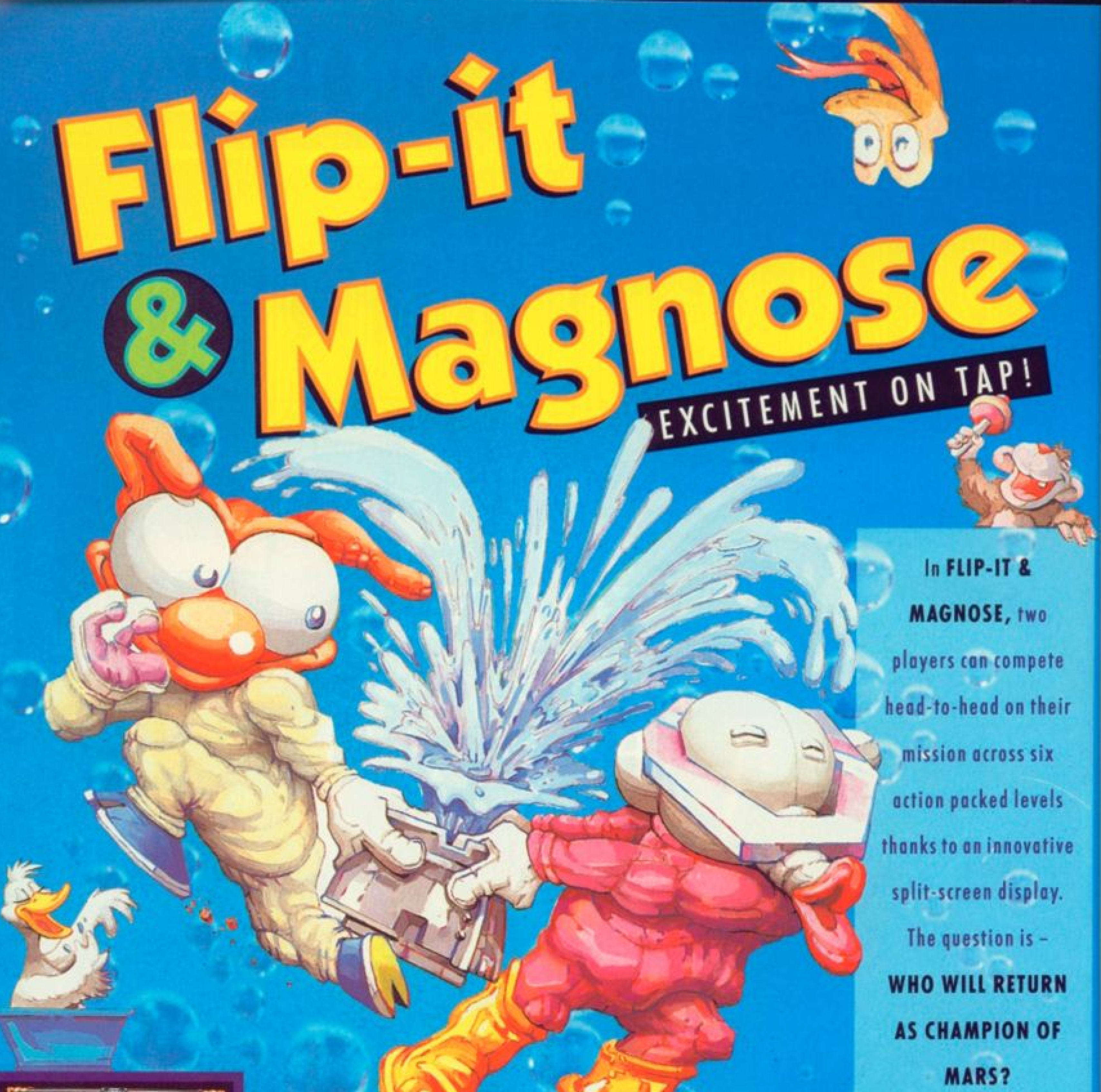
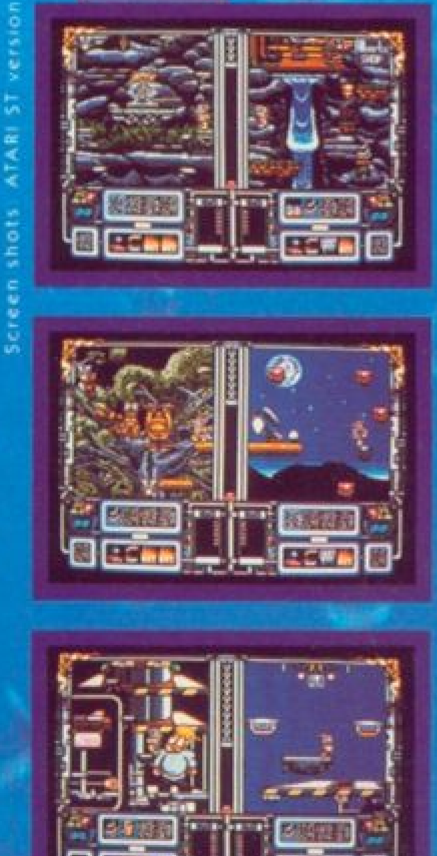
Flip-it & Magnose


EXCITEMENT ON TAP!

In **FLIP-IT & MAGNOSE,** two players can compete head-to-head on their mission across six action packed levels thanks to an innovative split-screen display. The question is – **WHO WILL RETURN AS CHAMPION OF MARS?**



TWO CAN PLAY AT THIS GAME! THE PLANET MARS IS RUNNING OUT OF WATER – AND ONLY YOU CAN SAVE IT . . . In a last ditch attempt to save the drought-stricken Red Planet, its two top agents, FLIP-IT & MAGNOSE, have been sent to Earth to collect enough water to save their planet. Sounds simple? Don't you believe it!

IMAGE WORKS

Image Works, Irwin House,
118 Southwark Street,
London SE1 0SW.
Tel: 071-928 1454
© 1990 Mirrorsoft Ltd.

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME

Bond is back courtesy of DOMARK and the Kremlin!

КРЕМЛИН
THE KREMLIN

Welcome comrade. After a quiet summer, Domark is set to release four games this autumn thanks to its new in-house software development team known as the Kremlin.

The Spy Who Loved Me, based around the James Bond movie, on Spectrum, C64, CPC, Amiga, ST, PC. ***Badlands***, conversion of the souped-up *Super Sprint* Tengen coin-op, on Spectrum, C64, Amiga, ST, CPC, PC. ***Mig-29 Fulcrum*** (working title), Domark's first flight-sim, on Amiga, ST, PC. ***STUN Runner***, conversion of the 3D *Roadblasters* Tengen coin-op, on Spectrum, C64, CPC, Amiga, ST, PC.

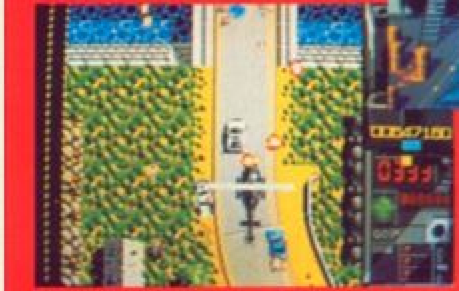
● **Rik Haynes**

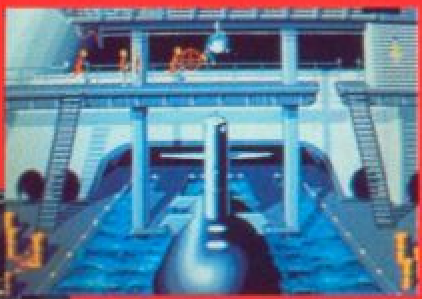
DIAL A DOMARK DEMO

The comrades at the Kremlin (Domark's software development house) are offering a unique service to all modem users – go upline and download special games, music and graphics demos (Amiga, ST and PC). You can also leave messages and hi-scores. The Domark/Kremlin bulletin board is open everyday from 8pm-8am on 0932 821744. Some connect codes for the cyberspace cowboys: 2400 8, N, 1 (2400 baud, eight databits, no parity, one stopbit). We promise you won't get flatlined!

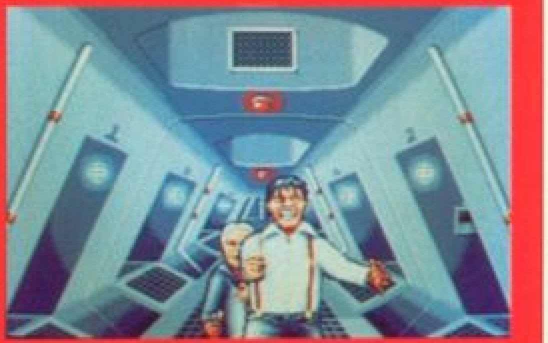
SHAKEN BUT NOT STIRRED

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME. A multi-level movie-license game. Driving your Lotus Espirit in a *Spy Hunter* kinda way. Coming up next... the underwater shoot'em-up section. Did you know 007 doesn't like short people or The Beatles?

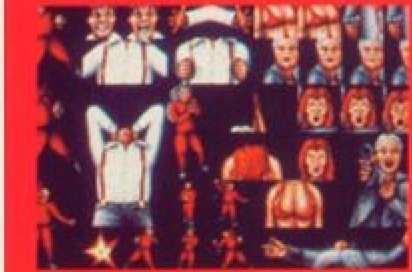




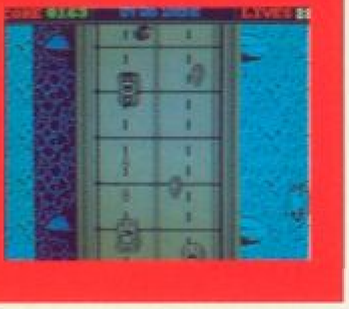
THE SPY WHO LOVED ME. Bond plants the explosive charge as you blast Stromberg's henchpeople. Did you know 007's enemy, SPECTRE, stands for SPecial Executive for Counter-espionage, Terrorism, Revenge and Extortion?



THE SPY WHO LOVED ME. Jaws has your Russian girlie in his grasp. Time to tackle him in *Op Wolf* style. Did you know 007 likes his eggs boiled for three and a quarter minutes?



THE SPY WHO LOVED ME. A selection of sprites from the shoot Jaws section. Did you know 007 has a maid called May?

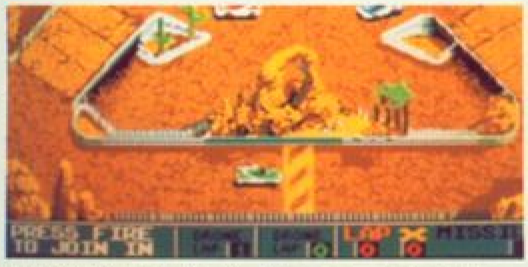


THE SPY WHO LOVED ME. Stopping Stromberg on the Spectrum. Did you know 007 is half Scots, half Swiss?

DO PAY ATTENTION 007

There have been 16 'official' Bond movies plus lots of 007 inspired spy capers like *Casino Royale* (David Niven as Bond and Woody Allen playing his nephew), *Never Say Never Again* (with toupee-touting Sean Connery and rubber-faced Rowan Atkinson) and the James Coburn *Flint* films.

1962 Dr No
1963 From Russia with Love
1964 Goldfinger
1965 Thunderball
1967 You Only Live Twice
1969 On Her Majesty's Secret Service
1971 Diamonds are Forever
1973 Live and Let Die
1974 The Man with the Golden Gun
1977 The Spy Who Loved Me
1979 Moonraker
1981 For Your Eyes Only
1983 Octopussy
1985 A View to a Kill
1987 The Living Daylights
1989 License to Kill

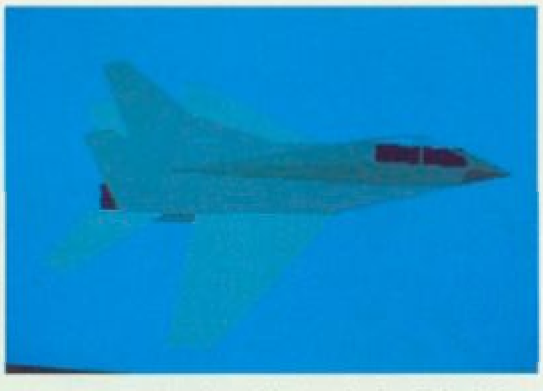


BADLANDS. A simple, but playable, racing game. Post-holocaust battle cars smash through eight treacherous tracks in a race to the finish – or death!

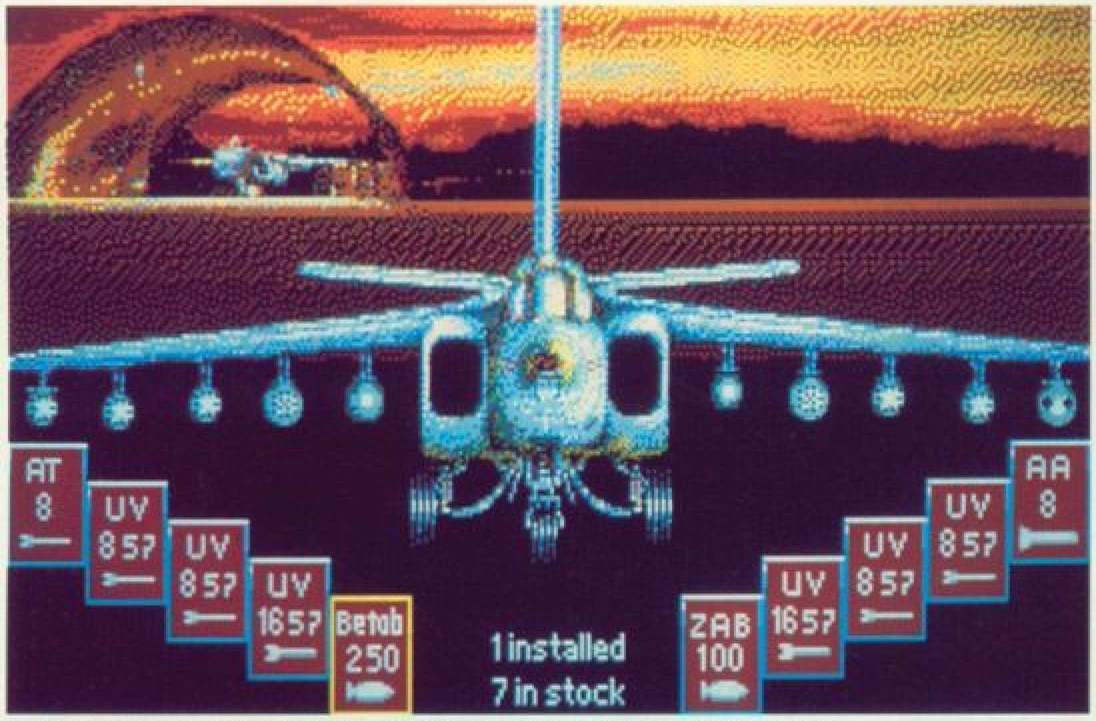
Roger Moore played James Bond in seven 007 movies.

STUN RUNNER

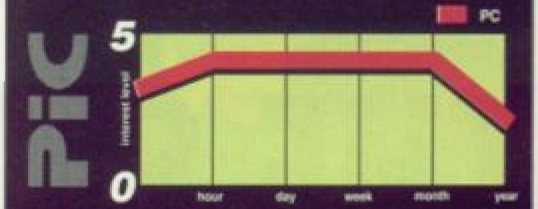
A fast polygon racer for speed freaks. *STUN RUNNER* has 23 levels including the Knee Jerk, Split Decision, Close Call, Coat Hangar, Clover Leaf and Blood Alley. Out in November on all major micros.



MIG-29 FULCRUM (working title). Domark's first flight-sim is being programmed by Simis, a professional simulator design team who previously worked at British Aerospace on Harrier sims. This work in progress shot shows your 60 polygon Soviet MiG-29 fighter. The game features five completely different missions involving reconnaissance, ground strike and air combat. Amiga will be enhanced by enlarged 256-line display and 32 colours, while PC has a deluxe 256-colour VGA option. No 8-bit versions are currently planned, "due to complexity and memory requirements". Out at Christmas.



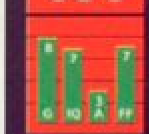
"I'll take 2,000 lbs of cluster bombs and a couple of gatlings, please." Tooling up before the rumble.



Like most flight sims, SU25 Stormovik, will hold your interest as you learn how to handle the plane, and try to complete the various missions without crashing. There's a good deal of long term interest also for flight sim fans who fancy a turn of low-altitude speed...

ACE RATING

850



IBM PC

The game makes good use of the EGA graphics in the static screens, and the sharpness and movement of the vector-filled polygon graphics is up to Electronic Arts' usual high standard. Can't say the same for the sound, though. Makes you pray for the day when all PCs have Amiga sound chips. The real attraction here, however, is the speed the programmer has managed to squeeze out of the machine.

RELEASE DETAILS

IBM PC	£29.99	OCTOBER

No other versions planned at present

STORMOVIK

Take to the sky as a Soviet Top Gun with Electronic Arts new flight sim...

The year is 1991: The Soviet Union, in a bid to preserve its Communist status, is fighting a war against insurgents within its own army and against blocs of anti-communist terrorists, who operate from the other side of the East German border.

Enter the Russian's newest and most advanced ground attack jet – the Sukhoi SU25 Stormovik. Specifically designed for defensive low-level counter operations against ground targets, the SU25 is regarded as the best ground attack jet in the world, and is extremely difficult to shoot down. As an elite young Stormovik pilot with the Red Airforce, you'll be ordered to fly challenging and dangerous attack missions against the enemy, who will sometimes be fighting with sophisticated tanks and weapons captured from the Soviet Army.

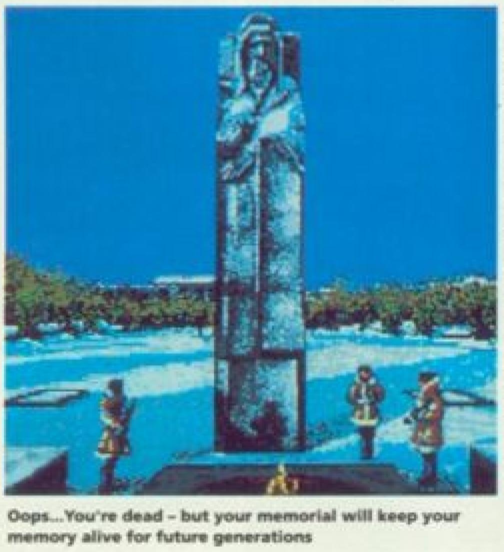
As a new recruit, you're advised to train in simulator mode to familiarise yourself with the aircraft, its handling and weapons systems before you take on the real enemy.

Your flight begins with a 'bombing up' session where you select the necessary bombs and missiles. Then it's into the cockpit, rev the engines and scream down the runway. The first thing you notice about flying the SU25 is the speed; the vector-filled scenery whizzes below you at an alarming rate, and you need to keep a constant eye on the height indicator on your cockpit Head Up Display (HUD) to prevent yourself from making a violent return to earth.

The aircraft is extremely responsive to joystick control; just the most delicate nudge on the stick is enough to perform most manoeuvres and any panicky movements on the stick will result in you and your machine hurtling to earth in a fairground ride fashion!

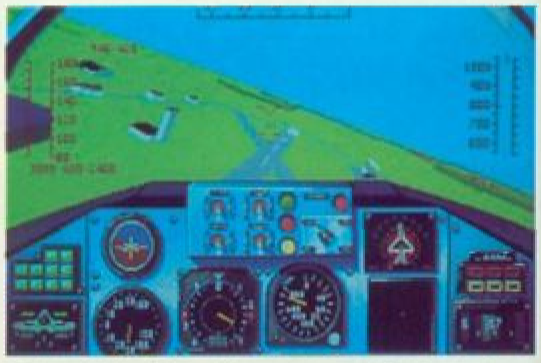
SU25 takes place over a three year period, from 1991-1993, and each year has its own list of flight missions, which grow in difficulty as the conflict against the terrorists progresses. Select your mission and you'll be briefed on your objectives and the location of your targets, what weaponry to carry, and what sort of weaponry the enemy will be using against you.

As flight sims go, *Stormovik* is one of the fastest and smoothest I've seen on the PC. The program supports CCG EGA, MCGA and Tandy graphics mode. The sound is the usual collection of tinny-sounding PC effects, but once you get into the groove of strafing a lorry convoy at zero feet, you won't be too bothered about the sound.



Oops...You're dead – but your memorial will keep your memory alive for future generations

One little feature I liked were the missions flown at night, and in extremely poor visibility (there's no horizon – just grey pea soup). Many different viewpoints from the cockpit to the control tower (now a standard feature in jet flight sims) are also included. Needless to say, there's a chunky and authoritative looking manual included with the game, and you need to spend a little time poring over the basics before climbing into the cockpit.



Panoramic view of your airbase and surrounding Russian steppes from your cockpit.

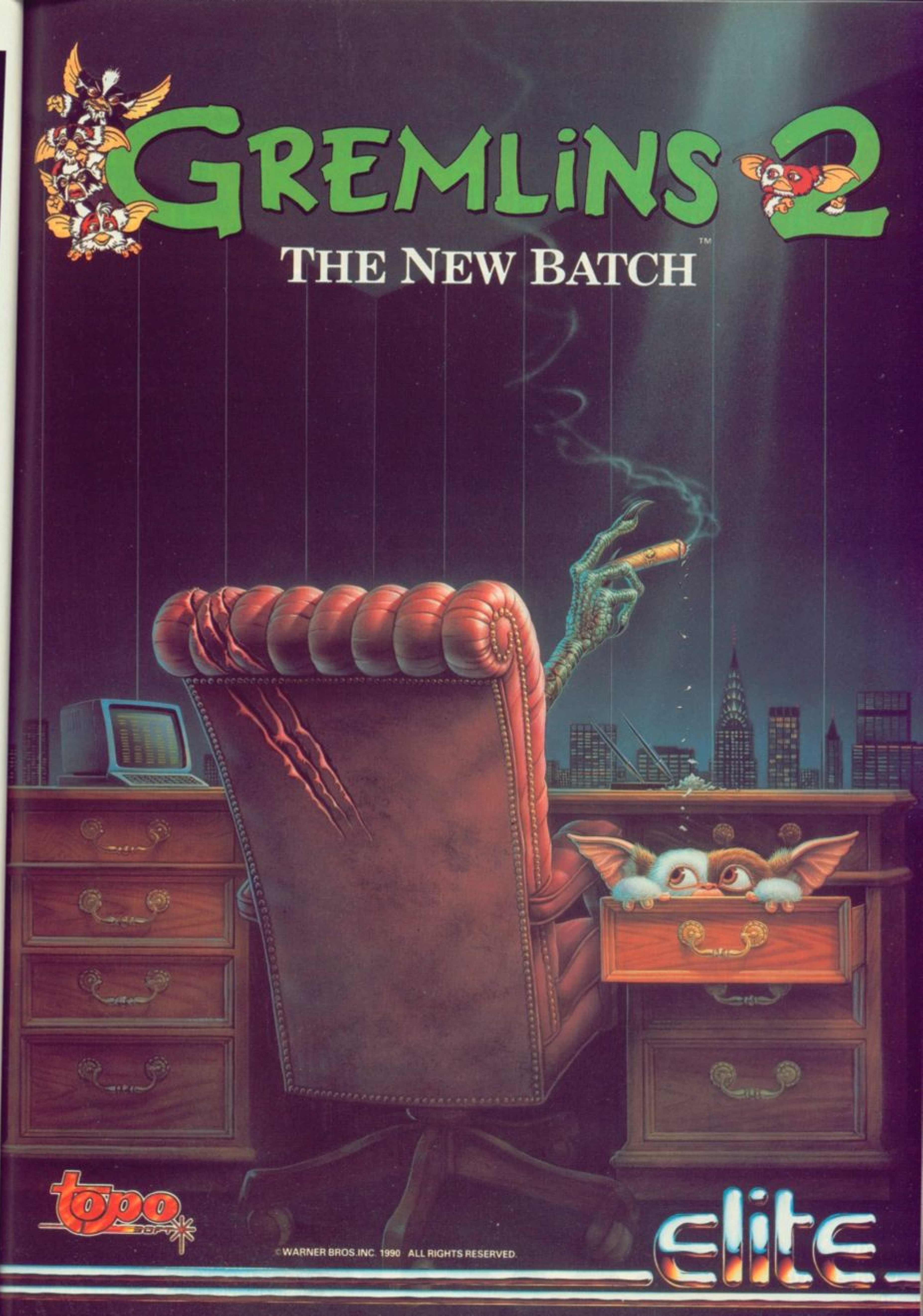
There's nothing startlingly new about *SU25* (the same menus of missions to fly, the same briefing and bombing up screens), but compared to other flight sims on the PC, it's fast, well programmed and challenging. Chocks away, Tovarich!

● **Ivan Hawkesley**

NB At the time of going to press, EA were still debating the final name of the game. Stormovik *is the current favourite...*

SU25 FACTBOX

The aircraft in Electronic Arts' new flight sim is based on a real aircraft – the Sukhoi SU25 "Frogfoot" close support and reconnaissance jet. With a crew of one pilot, a top speed of 546mph, and a combat range of 345 miles, the "Frogfoot" made itself a formidable reputation as a ground attack jet operating against Mujahadeen Guerillas in Afghanistan. It's distinctive long wingspan enables it to carry a frightening battery of weapons for its role; two 57mm rocket launcher pods on each wing, cluster bombs and a centrally mounted gatling gun for soft targets. In addition, it can also carry laser-guided attack missiles, and air-to-air missiles for it's own defence.


GREMLINS 2
THE NEW BATCH™
topo soft
elite

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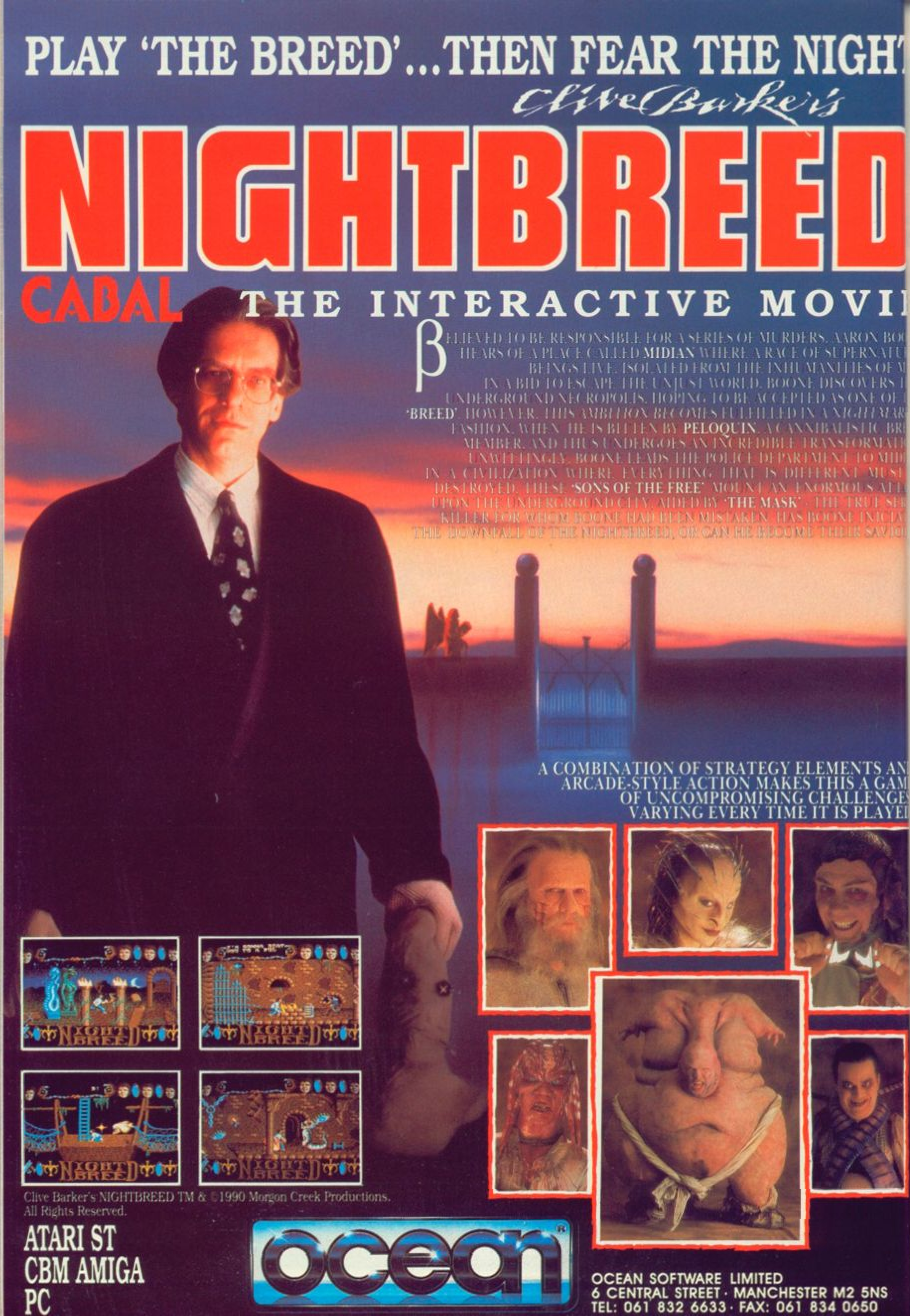
PLAY 'THE BREED'...THEN FEAR THE NIGHT
Clive Barker's
NIGHTBREED
CABAL
THE INTERACTIVE MOVI
NIGHTBREED
NIGHTBREED
NIGHTBREED
NIGHTBREED

BELIEVED TO BE RESPONSIBLE FOR A SERIES OF MURDERS, AARON BOO
HEARS OF A PLACE CALLED **MIDIAN** WHERE A RACE OF SUPERNATU
BEINGS LIVE, ISOLATED FROM THE INHUMANITIES OF M
IN A BID TO ESCAPE THE UNJUST WORLD, BOONE DISCOVERS I
UNDERGROUND NECROPOLIS, HOPING TO BE ACCEPTED AS ONE OF
'BREED'. *HOWEVER, THIS AMBITION BECOMES FULFILLED IN A NIGHTMAR*
FASHION, WHEN HE IS BITTEN BY **PELOQUIN**, A CANNIBALISTIC BRE
MEMBER, AND THUS UNDERGOES AN INCREDIBLE TRANSFORMATI
UNWITTINGLY, BOONE LEADS THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TO MID
IN A CIVILIZATION WHERE EVERYTHING THAT IS DIFFERENT MUS
DESTROYED, THESE **'SONS OF THE FREE'** MOUNT AN ENORMOUS AT
UPON THE UNDERGROUND CITY. AIDED BY **'THE MASK'** - THE TRUE SE
KILLER FOR WHOM BOONE HAD BEEN MISTAKEN. HAS BOONE INITIA
THE DOWNFALL OF THE NIGHTBREED, OR CAN HE BECOME THEIR SAVIO

A COMBINATION OF STRATEGY ELEMENTS AN
ARCADE-STYLE ACTION MAKES THIS A GAM
OF UNCOMPROMISING CHALLENGES
VARYING EVERY TIME IT IS PLAYED

Clive Barker's NIGHTBREED TM & ©1990 Morgon Creek Productions.
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GOLD OF THE AZTECS

Discover the steamy secrets of US GOLD'S Aztec adventure

Bret Conrad, ex-US Special Forces and one-time CIA, is an all-action guy waiting for an adventure to happen. The adventure comes along in the form of an old Amazon map, pin-pointing the location of a hidden Aztec tomb. Within the tomb lies incredible wealth – and it's there just waiting to be plundered.

Programmed by Kinetica software, *Gold of the Aztecs* is the result of 27,000 hours of work with several megabytes worth of graphics and animation. This arcade adventure smoothly scrolls on as Brett parachutes into the jungle, shoots his way past hordes of nasty Amazonian headhunters, and penetrates into the underground passages that lead to the Aztec tomb and the gold. As if the headhunters aren't deadly enough, the route to the Aztec tomb is riddled with a variety of very nasty booby traps, all waiting to consign Bret to the same fate that befell a group of greedy Conquistadors 400 years before.

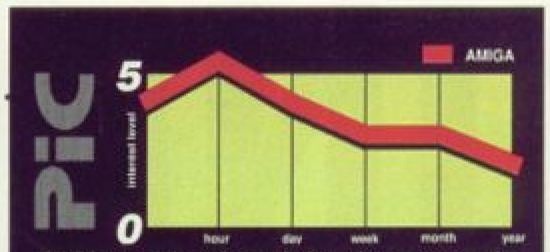
Against the dangers of the Amazon, Bret is armed only with his trusty automatic and a machete. Luckily he's a very athletic adventurer, able to run, jump, climb, not to mention forward and backwards somersault his way out of trouble. Guiding Bret through all the danger to the ultimate prize calls for patience, nerves of steel, and some serious joystick waggling. Avoiding deadly blowpipe-wielding headhunters, killer elephants, and deadly Aztec booby traps will take some practice.

The map gives you a scrolling piece by piece view of the complete layout of passages leading to the tomb, and as you'll see, it's enormous! Nobody could hope to get right the way through the labyrinth in one sitting, so a 'save game' option is included.

In terms of gameplay, layout and presentation, *Gold of the Aztecs* is a slickly conceived game. The sprites are detailed and well drawn – Bret himself is a typical Rambo style hunk, while the headhunters are a pot-bellied looking lot. The horizontally scrolling jungle scenery is well rendered, colourful without garish and unrealistic, while the arcade style animation keeps the action moving.

It might take a long time, but finally getting Bret through to the actual tomb, and getting the gold, gives a real sense of achievement, not to mention wealth beyond your dreams. There's enough tension and excitement in *Gold of the Aztecs* to satisfy most arcade style adventure freaks.

● **Ivan Hawksley**



The slick presentation and atmospheric opening sequence sets the mood and grabs your attention. The challenging level of gameplay combined with the save option means this is a game you'll keep coming back to, until you've cracked the secret of the Aztec tomb.

ACE RATING 868

G	IQ	A	FF
9	8	9	9

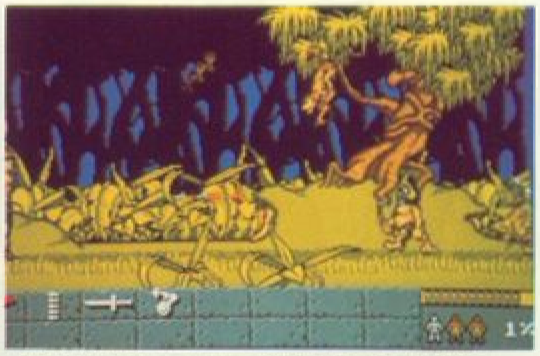
AMIGA

Detailed and colourful scenery coupled with good animation make *Gold of the Aztecs* a great game to view and play. Spooky music adds atmosphere and sets the mood for your deadly quest. A challenging and enjoyable game that makes good use of the Amiga's graphics and sound.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£TBAdk	September
AMIGA	£TBAdk	September
PC	£TBAdk	September

No other versions planned



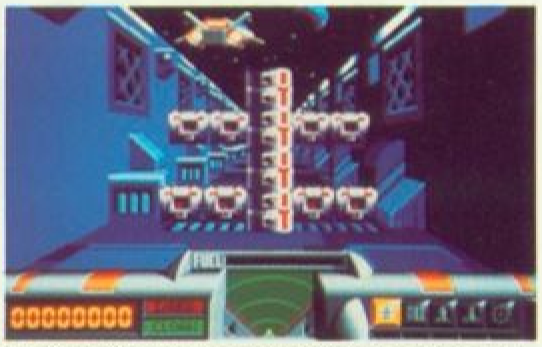
Gold of the Aztecs – pretty and highly playable, with the added bonus of a SAVE option

SHOCKWAVE

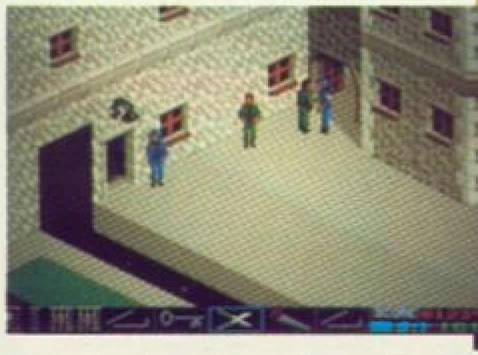
They're shocking. They're captivating. They're the latest games from DIGITAL MAGIC SOFTWARE...

Digital Magic Software (DMS) was formed in 1988 by two ex-CRL games developers, Jon Law and Jules Burt. During his time at CRL, Law was graphics designer for the infamous horror games: *Jack the Ripper, Wolfman* and *Frankenstein.* So will the latest DMS releases look horrifying? See for yourself with these ACE sneak glimpses of *Shockwave* and *Escape From Colditz.*

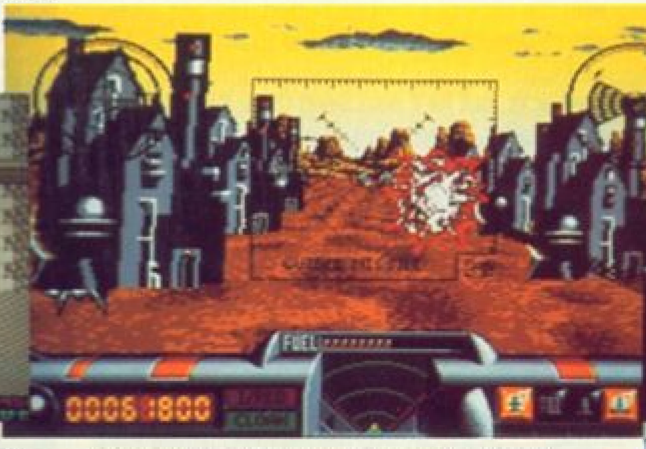
● **Rik Haynes**



The SHOCKWAVE tunnel sequnce in full-swing – shades of Star Wars perhaps? In the game you have to, "desperately try to dodge or destory hordes of alien scum swarming maniacally towards you!" An Amiga-only game due in September.

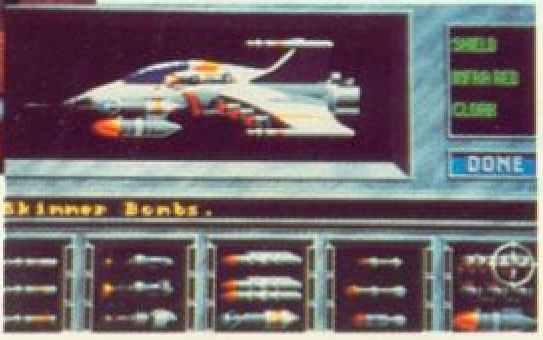


ESCAPE FROM COLDITZ uses the idea of the boardgame but adds some arcade action. You control four allied Prisoners of War attempting to escape Sonderlager – not a new export Euro-fizz but the German 'Special Camp' of Colditz during WWII. This isometric 3D game features over 600 internal locations. "If you really want to, you can even dig tunnels." Out in November on Amiga, ST, PC and C64.

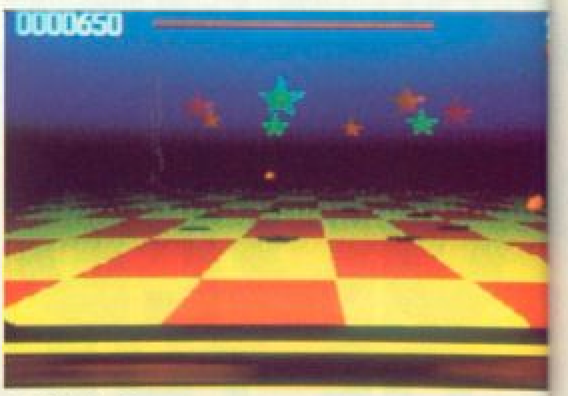


Flying through the SHOCKWAVE factories in your Super-Dooper Mark IV Blastermobile. You must defend four sectors from alien invaders. Mine your mountain ore, support your oil supply in the sea, arrange your army in the forests, and defend your desert factories.

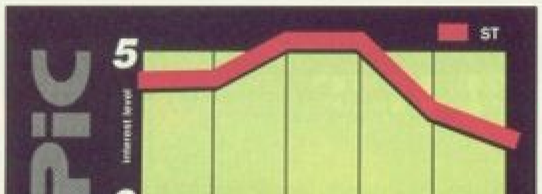
Selecting your SHOCKWAVE armaments. You can carry five weapons – chosen from a total of 15 – on each mission. Factories also manufacture extra shields, infra-red for night-flying and a cloaking device which stops aliens clocking you for a limited time.



VAXINE



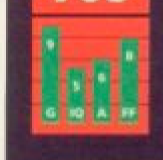
STARting level one...



A wonderful product, not just to look at but to play too. Short term interest will remain high due to easy beginner levels and skill development aids the long term interest. Over 99 levels to keep you going for a long time although inevitably the game will begin to pall in the end. A shoot-em-up for the more scientific gamester – it comes in a specially designed box as well!

ACE RATING

905



ATARI ST

Colour has been well used to give the impression of a surrealistic landscape, while the graphics themselves move smoothly and very fast. Sonically, the ST suffers to a degree; the introductive sample although brief, is not of particularly high quality, but in-game sounds serve to further enhance the atmosphere. The reviewed version was, according to Assembly Line, only 95% complete, although I could find nothing lacking in any respect.. An excellent product.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£19.99dk	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£24.99dk	OCT 90
IBM PC	£24.99dk	OCT 90

No other versions planned

US GOLD have an antidote for *E-Motion* fans

US Gold's last ray-traced rarity was *E-Motion*, an odd but highly original game which played upon the basic concepts of 'Newtonian physics' and now, Assembly Line (who also gave us the super-addictive *Pipemania* from Entertainment International) have teamed up with USG to give us a shot of *Vaxine*...

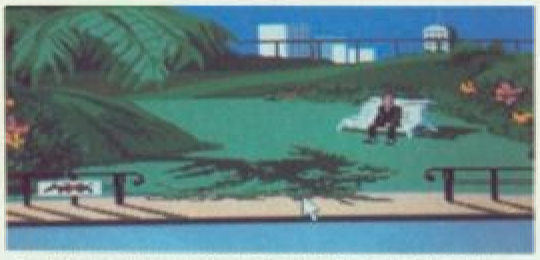
This abstract game is set inside the human body and the objective is to destroy rampaging viruses. You must protect the key body cells which are half buried in tissue. The invading viruses are represented by different coloured balls, as are your antidotes. Failure to hit the viruses with an antidote of a like colour does not destroy the virus, but causes a small star to be dropped, which when blasted, replenishes your limited ammo. In addition to this, clusters of stars may be found hovering over the landscape, for the same purpose. The amount your ammo is increased by, also depends on firing an antidote of the same colour.

Once the viruses have appeared, they immediately begin looking for a companion of the same colour.Upon finding each other, they join and hunt for a third. When all three are stringing along they'll head for your most vulnerable parts and pluck them from the body wall. The viruses then pop with excitement, releasing more, different coloured bachelor viruses to repeat the process. To help you, there are portals in the body which, when entered, freeze the game and allow you to move around checking on the locations of hidden viruses. The level is completed when all viruses are eliminated.

Vaxine is definitely a game to test your skills, and while the overall look of the product may deter the more strategic player, the game does require a significant amount of thought as random blasting leads to an ultimately swift demise. Coupled with the need for rapid hand-eye co-ordination, *Vaxine* is recommended as an original and entertaining product.

● **Chris Morley**

OPERATION STEALTH



Don't just sit there, you've got a stealth fighter to find!

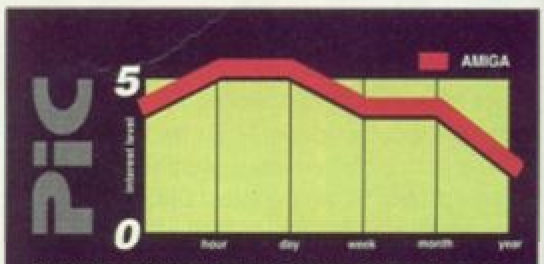
The new Stealth Fighter is the most sophisticated aircraft in aviation history. Totally invisible to Radar, able to fly low and fast, and possessing state of the art weapons and avionics, it's the pride of the US Airforce. Unfortunately for the Americans, it has been stolen!

The CIA is called in to hunt for the missing aircraft, and they in turn, call in their top undercover agent, John Glames (a sort of American James Bond). Using his skill, ingenuity, and an array of gadgets, (including such handy travelleing aids as a passport forging machine and a pen that squirts acid) Glames mission to takes him to the exotic South American state of Santa Paragua, (where the the ruling Military Dictator is top of the CIA's suspect list) in the search for the stealth, but he's got to hurry – the KGB has also heard about the disappearance, and their agents are hot on the trail.

Delphine has followed the success of *Future Wars*, with this, another Cinematique interactive adventure. *Operation Stealth* has all the addiction of an interactive adventure, and is totally mouse-driven, making it instantly playable. Unlike the earlier *Future Wars*, improvements have been added in that any objects you pick up and examine, are shown in close up, so you can actually see what you're looking at. You move Glames around exotic locations, pick up, examine, and use objects and generally interact with the scenery and any characters you meet, all with the click of a mouse button. Glames' powers of deduction will be tested to the full as he picks up the trail of the missing fighter and tails suspects, but he'll also need to be brave and resourceful, to get himself out of dangerous situations. The graphics are well presented and the exotic scenery gives the game the feel of a James Bond story. The game will undoubtedly appeal to the sleuths amongst you, while the arcade gamers will like the underwater sequence in the game. The graphics, and animation are well designed and presented and the overall playability of the game makes for an engrossing and addictive game. You'll get really involved and won't want to leave *Op Stealth* alone until you've got to the bottom of the mystery. *Operation Stealth* is a well designed, thought-out and put together game.

● **Ivan Hawksley**

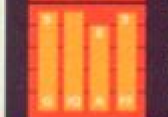
DELPHINE hunts for a missing stealth fighter...



Maybe it's a cliched spy story, but *Operation Stealth* makes for an entertaining and very playable interactive adventure. Delphine has certainly improved on its last interactive game, *Future Wars*, with several game refinements, and it looks as though Cinematique games are here to stay.- Most people will find this one fun to play, and the overall presentation is nice to look at. Budding secret agents and detectives will be hooked.

ACE RATING

910



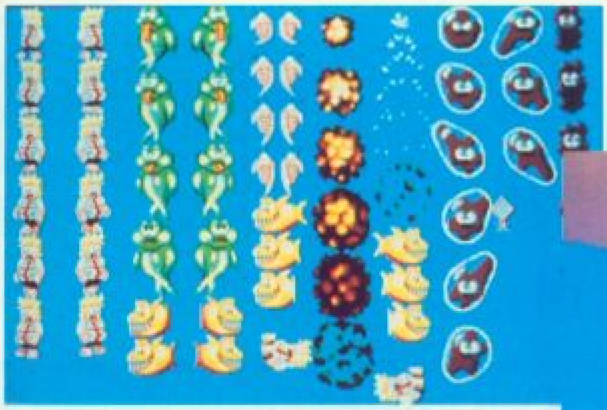
AMIGA

Nice graphics and a lengthy intro sequence give the game a movie style opening and set the scene for the adventure. A good looking interactive adventure with some neat touches of animation such as the greasy looking airport officials and the way in which the hero purposefully strides from one scene to another. The sound is nothing incredible; pretty basic sound effects, although the title music is quite groovy.

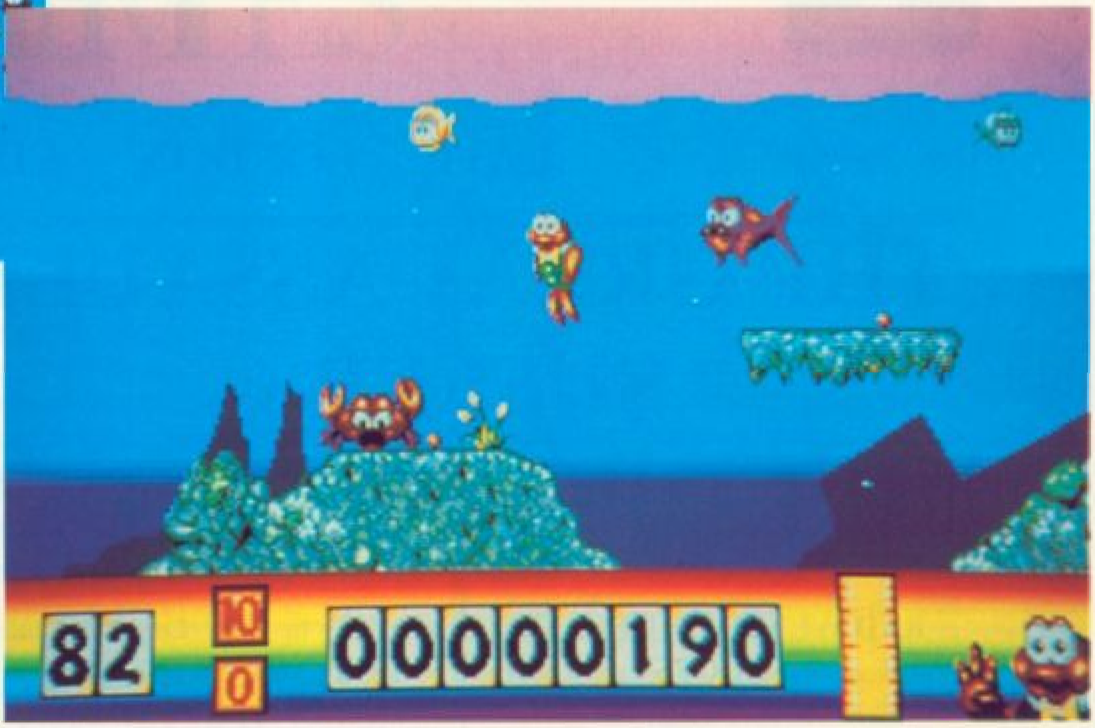
RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99dk	September
AMIGA	£24.99dk	September
PC	£29.99dk	September

No other versions planned



Just some of the little cuties that Millennium plan to have romping across your screen in their underwater green game



James gets down to some serious cleaning up beneath the waves in *James Pond*

MANIX

Crazy balls and psychedelic landscapes in Millennium's new puzzler...

Millennium's teaser is reminiscent of *Crazy Ball*, a game that appeared on the C64 a while back, and is just as weird and wonderful.

Filbert is a little yellow ball, whose sole task in life is to bounce on each square of a gridded landscape and change its colour. Hardly an original scenario, but games like this either win or lose on playability, not originality, and first impressions of this cute puzzler is that it really delivers the goods.

The first landscape is completely flat, but later Filbert has hills and slopes to contend with and his manoeuvres get that little bit more tricky. As the grids themselves are constantly changing, Filbert has to be quick on the bounce to be successful.

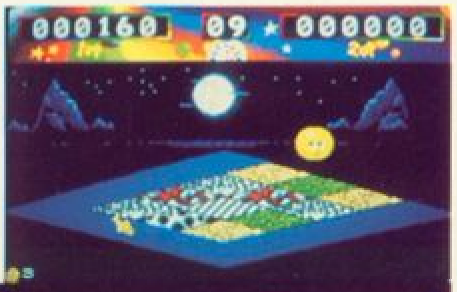
While all this is going on, some pretty weird sprites are also up and about; Filbert can eat any of the Gold Coins that bounce with him, gaining extra energy and points, but eating the grenades, funnily enough, can be highly detrimental to his health. In later stages, our fluorescent friend has to contend with bullying Red Viking balls (complete with horned helmet), Robots, Acid, Killer Ninjas and sprouting trees and spikes. Filbert also has to be careful to stay on dry land; bouncing into the sea that surrounds his land results in loss of life and points.

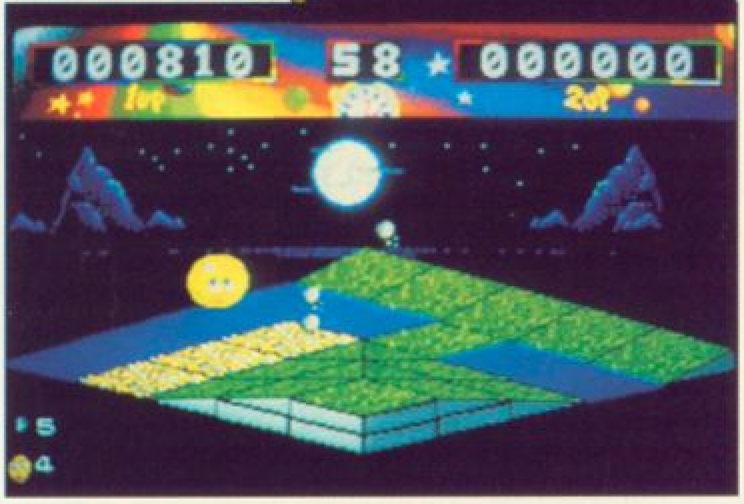
Graphically, *Manix* is colourful and wonderfully psychedelic with a healthy touch of cute running through all 128 3D isometric screens. The game has a suitably catchy musical backing and the action is augmented by some well weird ditties.

Manix includes a comprehensive game editor option for when you get bored of the three different levelsand their various stages and looks like it might become one of the year's silliest and most entertaining games. Fans of arcade style romps that combine a lovable hero with a totally weird theme (and who missed the title on its first release) should look out for it in late September.

● Ivan Hawkesley

More *Manix* action as Filbert struggles to paint that landscape





Filbert on the bounce in *Manix*

JAMES, YOU'RE SO CUTE

He's sexy, he's dashing, he's debonair, he's a fish! And his name's Pond – James Pond.

He stars in a 12 level sub aquatic scenario due out in November for ST and Amiga. It's a very promising looking example of cute, involving the retrieval of radioactive cannisters, plugging leaks in oil tankers, cleaning up the sea bed, and other 'green' objectives. All this is accompanied by eye-poppingly colourful graphics, making *James Pond Underwater Agent* one to look out for...

👍	👎
• CUTE • PLAYABLE • BUILT-IN GAME EDITOR.	• DIFFICULT TO CONTROL AT TIMES.

LABOURS OF HERCULES

And while we're on the Millenium case, *Yolanda*, a (slightly ancient) reissue involving 12 levels of dangerous, sweaty-palmed platform action, is due out in late September.

The game has the heroine of the title struggling to complete the Tasks of Hercules without being destroyed in the process. There are over 50 levels of action and a game trainer option, originally programmed by Steve Bak – but you saw it all back in 1985...or thereabouts! Hmmm...

THE

No. 59,967 LATE LONDON EDITION LONDON WED

THE GREAT ASSAULT SUFFERS MULTIPLE SETBACKS

BAD WEATHER DELAYS TROOPS

MASS ATTACK BY AIRBORNE TROOPS REPELLED

The Allied Expeditionary Army was fighting last night on the beaches of Normandy after attempting the greatest operation of its kind in history.

Heavy casualties were suffered at sea from German shore batteries, and the attempted air invasion was aborted as parachute troops were engaged and shot down as they landed.

Mr. Churchill announced last evening that the sea passage had met with "far greater resistance than had been anticipated" as the weather in the English Channel deteriorated rapidly, slowing the Allied Forces' progress as they met not the "stiff resistance expected, but a much stronger, and agressive posture" adopted by German commanders.

German forces were expected only to defend the Fortress of Europe in the face of the concentrated Allied attack on the narrow Cherbourg peninsula. Their tactics of meeting the Allied attacking hordes with split forces on multiple fronts is a reversal of the strategy anticipated, illustrating the flexibility of the Axis forces' battle plans.

Orders issued by the German High Command have shown the highest degree of thought and planning, as far down the chain of command as those given to individual battle units. The front-line units have high morale and are showing great experience in resisting the Allies' invasion. They appear to be utilising the battle tools at their disposal to maximum effect.

It is imperative that the leaders of the Allied Expeditionary Force modify their invasion plans. It is fortunate that, very soon, Rainbird will give them the means to do so.

OTHER CAMPAIGN NEWS

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ATTEMPTED LANDINGS STALLED

A statement issued from Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, yesterday, read:-

COMMUNIQUE No. 1

Under the command of General Eisenhower, allied naval forces, supported by light airforces, attempted to land allied armies this morning on the north-western coast of France. Early reports tell of heavy losses in the face of aerial and land based bombardments by Axis forces.

THE KING'S VISIT TO SUPREME H.Q.

BEACH-HEAD REPORTS

The King visited General Eisenhower at Supreme H.Q. Allied Expeditionary Forces yesterday afternoon. He was accompanied by Mr. Winston Churchill, as Minister in Attendance. The King and Mr. Churchill also visited Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory, C.-in-C., at his H.Q. of the Allied Air Forces.

The King and the Prime Minister drove together from Buckingham Palace immediately after luncheon, which Mr. Churchill had taken with the King. At the H.Q. the King and the Prime Minister talked to high officers directing operations in the field, and were shown the expected effects of the one hundred variables governing the outcome of the invasion. They were also shown reports coming in from the beaches, and discussed the Production goals which have been set towards building up the ports of Southern England.

ALLIES' TACTICAL MISTAKES

From our Special Correspondent in London

It was becoming apparent in London last night that Allied commanders may well have underestimated the potential of the German Forces, and made serious tactical errors in drawing up their initial battle plans.

TIMES

RAINBIRD

JUNE 7 1944

POSTAGE: INLAND 1d ; ABROAD 2d **PRICE 3d**

They must now reassess further lines of action in order to take full advantage of the flexibility at their fingertips.

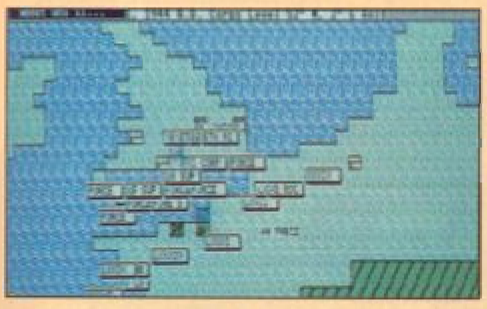
The 'Atlantic Wall' of resistance built by the Germans cannot apparently be surmounted by the single unit attacks launched against it under prevailing conditions. Allied forces are preparing to switch to multiple front attacks with a heightening of agression.The concentration on viewing the battle at Division Level must be widened to encompass a greater degree of Group Level strategic planning.

Even if such last minute switches in the battle equations prove wise, doubts are surfacing in London over the Allied Forces readiness to encounter all sixteen terrain types if a successful beach-head is established.

Allied command has extensive knowledge of all 'special squares' along the French coast. These are points of major strategic importance such as ports, towns and fortifications. They are gaining up to the minute information on local temperature, climate and wind direction, in addition to the potential capability and strengths of the Axis production ports.

Keeping track of all the factors within the conflict is being made easier by the constant updating of battle reports dispatched from the front, and the inputting of this information into sophisticated pre-drawn battle plans.

So that the early losses which have been suffered may be reversed, and the threat of German counter-invasion may be repelled, Supreme Allied Command are adapting those battle-plans in their Master Control Panel, thought to be a body of men comprising the finest military brains available worldwide.



UMS II - Nations At War - incorporates three scenarios, comprising the Assault on Fortress Europe, the Crusades of Alexander the Great, and the Napoleonic Wars. Developed by Intergalactic, the award winning programmers of the original UMS, in conjunction with Rainbird, the Masters of Strategy, UMS II will be available for your Commodore Amiga, Atari ST, IBM PC and compatibles and Apple Macintosh.

WAITING FOR THE WORD A VAST GATHERING

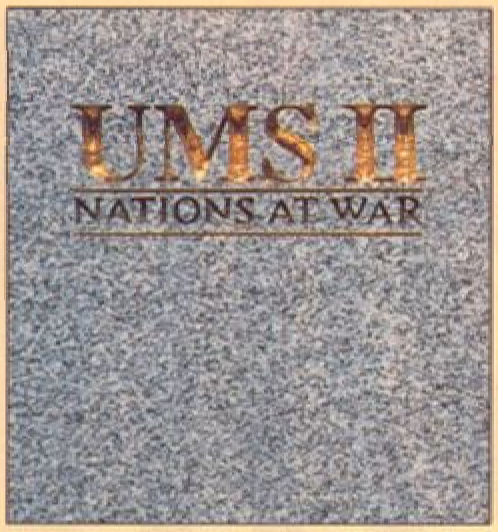
FINAL MOVES TO THE SEA

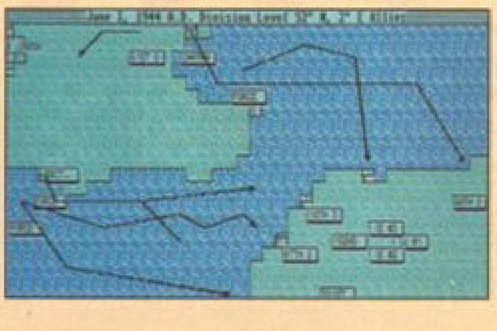
From Our Special Correspondent

An English Port, June 5 1944

The time has come. All we await now is the word to go forth and strike the terrific blow in Western Europe, of which General Montgomery writes in his valediction to the assault troops under his command. When this despatch appears that blow will have been struck; and as one gazes out over an anchorage of fond remembrance in which, framed by the sweep of England's green shore, countless invasion ships lie at their stations, the mind recoils from the dimensions of it all.

For those tight packed ships represent only one of the rivers of men and machines that all along the coast are pouring out into the sea. Four years ago, almost to the day, the tide of water had flooded from the east into the French channel ports before swirling back on Paris and far beyond. Now the tide has turned, and in this suspended moment of history the first mighty wave is gathered before it crashes down on the enemy's beaches. And the near observer gets no more than the fleeting, awesome glimpse of it that a solitary swimmer would have of a great breaker in an angry sea.





THE MIGHTIEST

REWRITE IN HISTORY

The mightiest of all time - such phrases come glibly but say very little. Words, indeed, pale before the vastness of the reality; attempts to convey the sheer depth of strategy fail in prose. To experience is to understand - Nations at War.

Borne of a classic, the original UMS. Imitated but never surpassed.Until now. This fragile planet for which man fights is mapped with precision.From the war-clouds enfolding our Earth to the bloody battlefronts of vulnerable flesh, this is a truly Unviversal Military conflict.Such an abundance of changeable parameters has never governed the activities of Nations at War before.

War has winners, but this is no game. it is the greatest wargaming utility. To encompass the the changing political, economic, climatic, geographic and human factors was the Intergalactic goal. At last, perfection is achieved.

Learnt from the lessons of history, from the crusades of Alexander to Napoleon's quest for Europe and beyond, here is the knowledge, requiring only the skill of a would-be Commander of men.

As Allied Supreme Command struggle for the means to reverse the error of their ways, up to fifty people sit down in the hope of rewriting history.

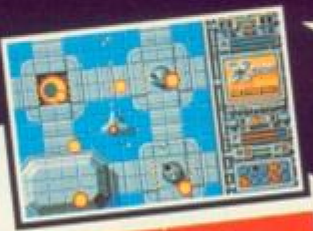
They now have that ability.

UMS II - Nations at War.

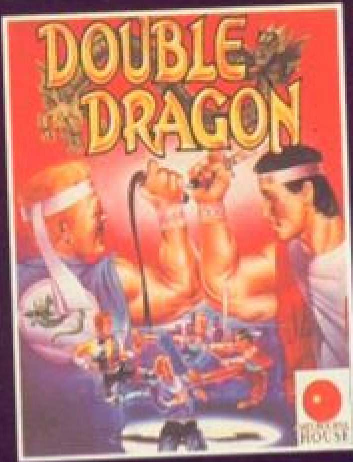
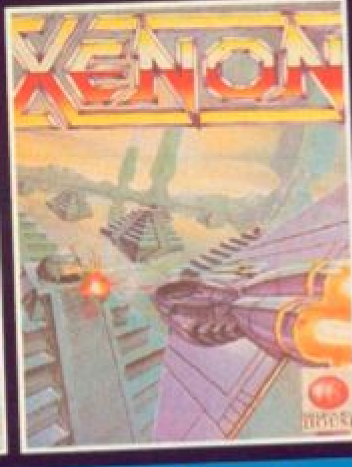
Look

BRILLIANT AND AMAZING

DOUBLE DRAGON

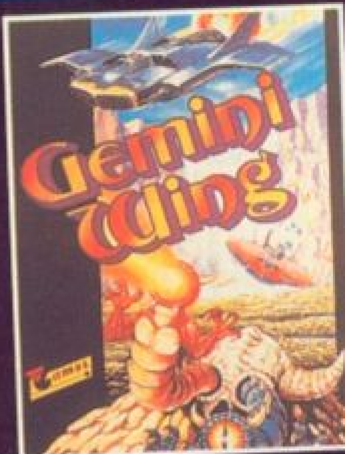
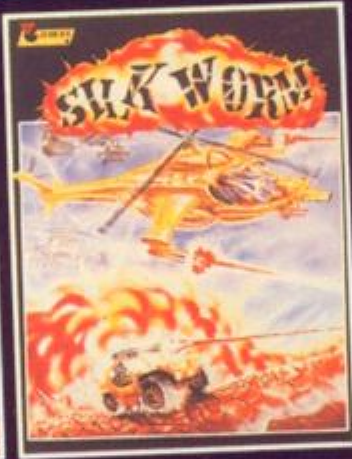

XENON

Virgin Games

100% ACTION!

editionONE

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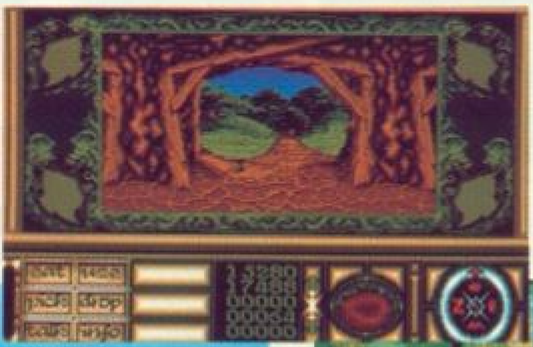
Virgin GAMES

MEETING THE CHALLENGE

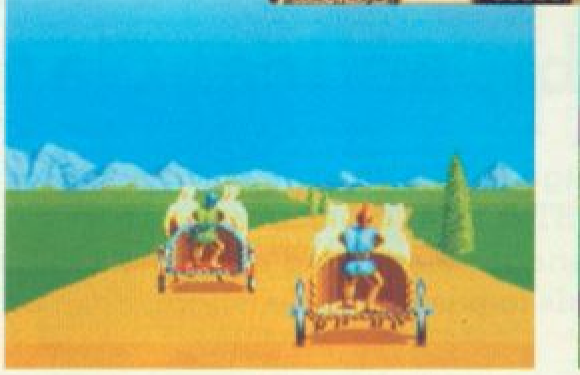
Why is PSYGNOSIS is pumping huge amounts of cash into game development?

More sophisticated gameplay, revolutionary new graphics techniques, even better intro sequences – these are just some of the advancements Psygnosis is promising with its next generation of games. ACE readers have already seen *Shadow of the Beast 2, The Killing Game Show, Awesome, Walker* and *Puggsy* back in issue 34. Psygnosis is also working on the games shown here: *Obitus, Carthage* and *Nitro*. Look out for full reviews after ACE has played the finished versions.

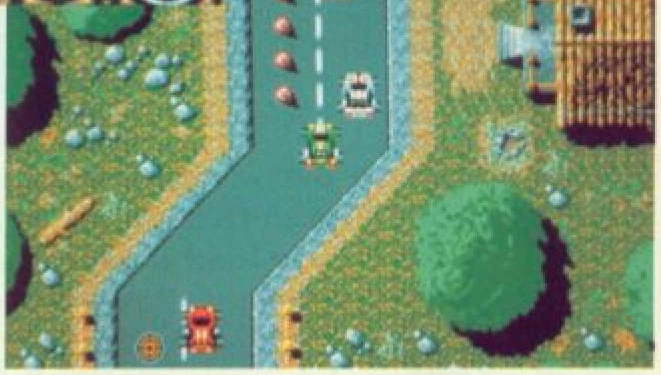
● **Rik Haynes**



► **OBITUS is a radical departure for Psygnosis. Huge fantasy role-playing game with a mixture of gameplay styles and viewpoints. Initially available on Amiga and ST, *Obitus* would benefit from CD-ROM implementation – CDTV version is possible.**



► **CARTHAGE. Strategy wargame set in ancient times. Enlivened by chariot race arcade sequence (shown here) and a fractal-generated map. Out in October on Amiga and ST.**



▼ **NITRO for Amiga and ST. A simple, but very addictive, simultaneous three-player racing game in a similar fashion to Sega's *Hot Rod* coin-op.**

OPERATION HARRIER

Rotoscape your Harrier around the Middle East in US GOLD's aerial shoot'em-up

Five years after the controversy of *Raid over Moscow*, US Gold gets topical again, this time with a Middle East shoot'em-up. Are you ready to blast the 'butchers of Baghdad'?

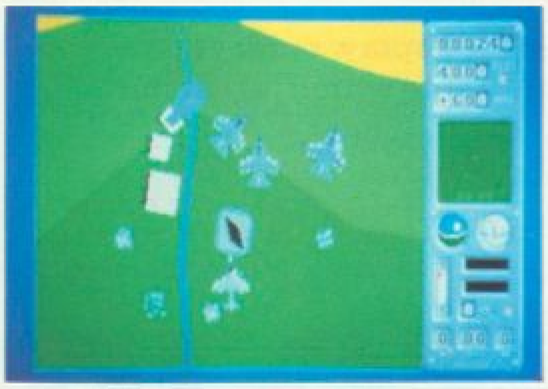
Certain fanatical Middle Eastern powers have acquired nuclear warheads, and now threaten the stability of the world. You're the pilot of the versatile vertical take-off Harrier jet, sailing somewhere in the Middle East onboard a US aircraft carrier. Your job as an ace Harrier pilot is to retrieve the threatening nukes. You can only do this by successfully flying a number of missions against the enemy before going-in for the pick-up.

Operation Harrier is designed by Creative Materials (the people who gave you *Rotox*) and uses the same Rotoscape technique. Your jump jet is viewed from above, with everything below it rotating through 360 degrees.

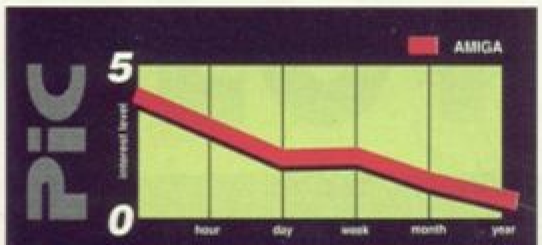
After a mission briefing from the commanding officer (a manic looking fellow), you select the weapons your aircraft will carry for the flight, choosing between heat-seeking missiles or missiles pods, 500lb or 1000lb bombs. You're shown your jet on the carrier deck, being readied for take-off, then it's thumbs-up, and away you go. Most of the missions are bombing raids against enemy ships and ground targets. You must watch out for enemy jets and helicopters – too many hits from air-to-air missiles, and you'll go down in flames, suffer a soaking and a humiliating dressing-down from your superior. Complete each mission, and you'll have the chance to get the nukes and save the free world.

As aerial shoot'em-ups go, *Operation Harrier* is a disappointment – the scenario and gameplay are very unoriginal. Gameplay and graphics simply become monotonous the more you play the game. The Rotoscape which worked so well in *Rotox*, loses its novelty here, and perhaps should be kept to outer space. If US Gold want to cut it with aerial shoot'em-up fans, it will have to do better than this.

● **Ivan Hawksley**



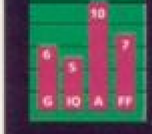
Blasting the 'Butchers of Baghdad'



There's not really much to recommend this game. The unoriginal and repetetive gameplay and the lack of speed and below standard graphics only serve to sink what might have been a good game. Hardened shoot-em-up fans will not be impressed and those who by the game will soon find the rotoscape novelty wearing off.

ACE RATING

613



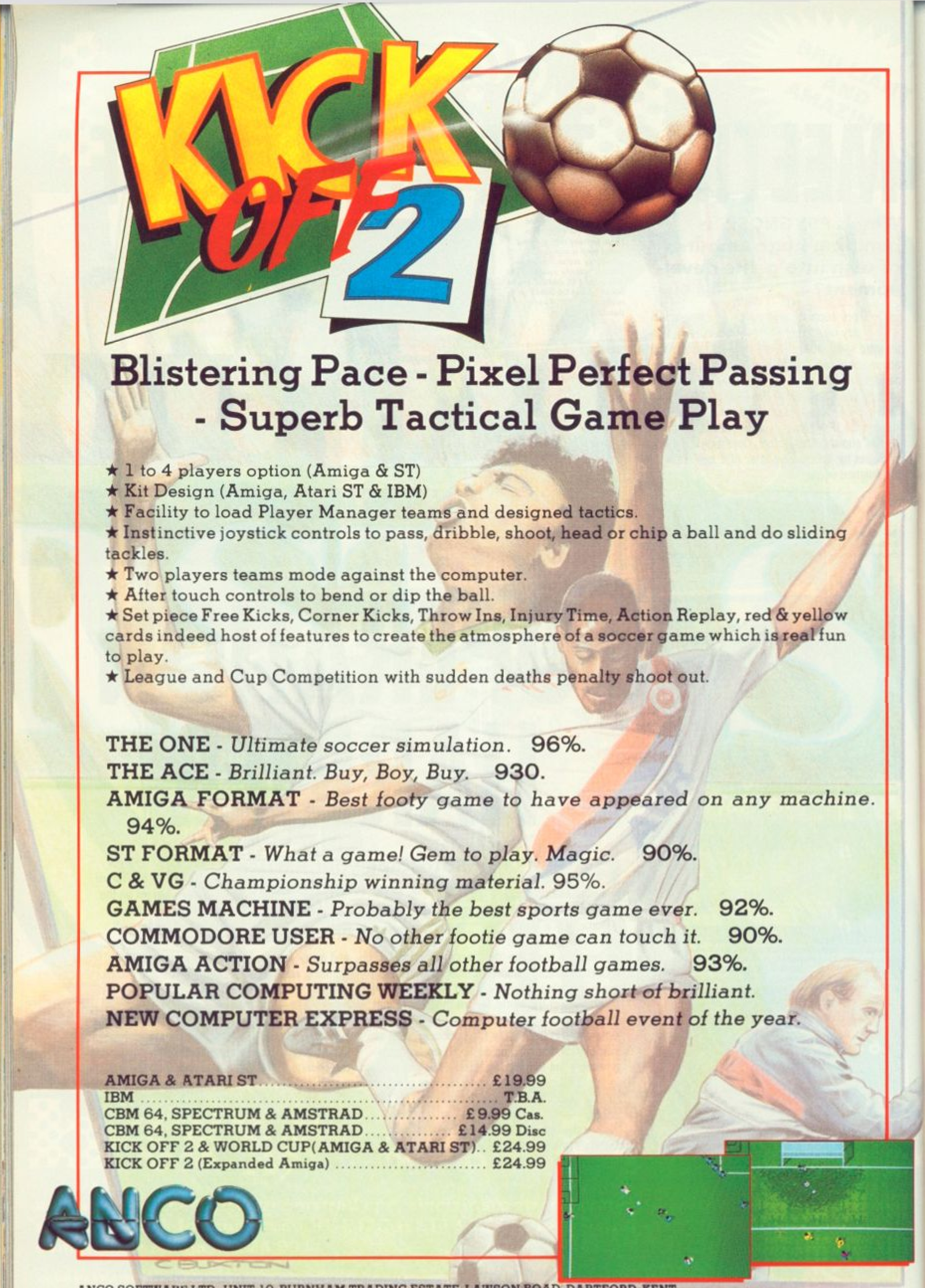
AMIGA

Reasonable graphics on the title screen give way to very so so graphics on the actual game. There's not enough in the way of colour or detail, especially on the land and sea below the Harrier jet, and even the missiles and explosions look tame and harmless. The the sound is a good standard with a rip-roaring soundtrack and music by Kevin Collier. Game status: finished pre-production game with sound effects and tracks provided on audio cassette.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£TBAdk	September
AMIGA	£TBAdk	September
PC	£TBAdk	September

No other versions planned



Blistering Pace - Pixel Perfect Passing - Superb Tactical Game Play

- ★ 1 to 4 players option (Amiga & ST)
- ★ Kit Design (Amiga, Atari ST & IBM)
- ★ Facility to load Player Manager teams and designed tactics.
- ★ Instinctive joystick controls to pass, dribble, shoot, head or chip a ball and do sliding tackles.
- ★ Two players teams mode against the computer.
- ★ After touch controls to bend or dip the ball.
- ★ Set piece Free Kicks, Corner Kicks, Throw Ins, Injury Time, Action Replay, red & yellow cards indeed host of features to create the atmosphere of a soccer game which is real fun to play.
- ★ League and Cup Competition with sudden deaths penalty shoot out.

THE ONE - *Ultimate soccer simulation.* 96%.

THE ACE - *Brilliant. Buy, Boy, Buy.* 930.

AMIGA FORMAT - *Best footy game to have appeared on any machine.* 94%.

ST FORMAT - *What a game! Gem to play. Magic.* 90%.

C & VG - *Championship winning material.* 95%.

GAMES MACHINE - *Probably the best sports game ever.* 92%.

COMMODORE USER - *No other footie game can touch it.* 90%.

AMIGA ACTION - *Surpasses all other football games.* 93%.

POPULAR COMPUTING WEEKLY - *Nothing short of brilliant.*

NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS - *Computer football event of the year.*

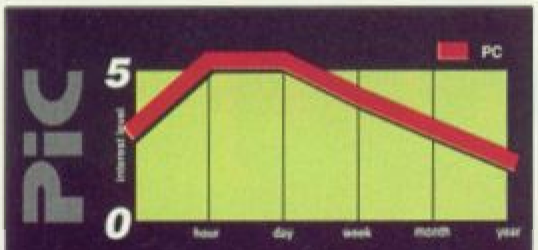
AMIGA & ATARI ST	£19.99
IBM	T.B.A.
CBM 64, SPECTRUM & AMSTRAD	£9.99 Cas.
CBM 64, SPECTRUM & AMSTRAD	£14.99 Disc
KICK OFF 2 & WORLD CUP(AMIGA & ATARI ST)	£24.99
KICK OFF 2 (Expanded Amiga)	£24.99

ANCO

ANCO SOFTWARE LTD., UNIT 10, BURNHAM TRADING ESTATE, LAWSON ROAD, DARTFORD, KENT.
Telephone No.: 0322 92513/92518. Fax No.: 0322 93422.

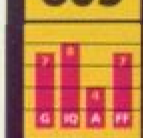
MURDER

US GOLD's cluehunter



It doesn't take much time to make headway in your investigations, and once the thrill of achievement starts racing through your veins, there's no stopping you. The random elements of the game mean that no two games are completely alike, so the game never loses its challenge. One of the small breed of games that you can return to time and time again.

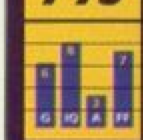
ACE RATING
805



AMIGA

The designers have tried to recreate a 40's murder mystery movie, and they have succeeded. The authentically designed characters, along with the black and white graphics, do well to create the right atmosphere. Sound is strictly limited to a few spot effects, but this doesn't detract from the gameplay. An involving and entertaining product, but one that needs a fair bit of thought to play.

ACE RATING
795



IBM PC

Not a huge deal of difference between this and the other versions. Obviously in the less capable modes, the graphic lose their distinctness, and a lot of the characterisation is lost. The gameplay is identical, however, if not a little on the slow side at times, especially when there are a few moving characters on screen. Still as much of a challenge, though.

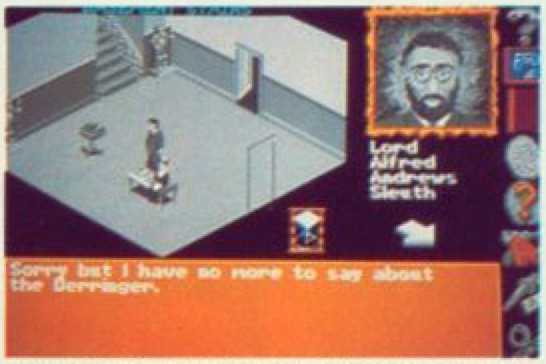
RELEASE DETAILS

AMIGA	£19.99dk	OUT NOW
PC	£24.95dk	OUT NOW
ST	£19.99 dk	IMMINENT
C64	£9.99 cs £14.99 dk	IMMINENT

No other versions planned

Hot on heels of the TV appearance of Cluedo comes another mystery, another large aristocratic country house and another murder. A private detective, you have two hours to find the weapon and unmask the the criminal.

Initial impressions are highly favourable. There are millions of different possible storylines since all characters and events are randomly generated at the start of the game. This keeps the interest up even after you've cracked it and means that, however often you play, your investigations will inevitably follow a shoal of red herrings.



Sorry but I have no more to say about the Derringer.

A typical scene from the game. Any of these people could be the murderer, and is that the weapon on the table?

The display shows the room you're in and a set of icons. Clicking on objects and people reveals identities and information, clicking on exits leads you through the house. You can do any number of sleuth-like things via the icons, such as question somebody, dust an object for fingerprints, read/write notes or make an arrest, provided you have the murder weapon as proof.

For a game that looks arcade orientated, you have a lot less actual physical control than you would expect. Everything your character does is the result of a command, which can present annoying timing problems as the other characters may be quicker off the mark than you are – leaving the room, for example, just as you've finished telling your character to question them.

Interrogation is simple. You get three menus with lists of all the characters, places and objects in the game. By mixing the three, you can construct some simple questions about specific situations, to which most people will either tell you they saw the butler pick up the wineglass, or simply that they don't know. The murderer will never incriminate him/herself.

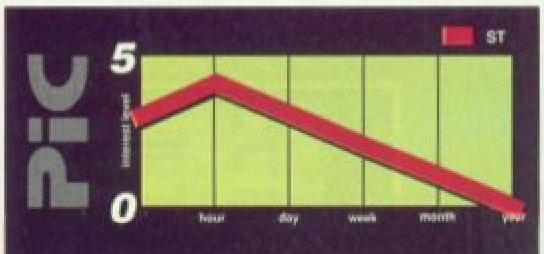
You also need evidence. To finally prove the murderer, you have to match his/her fingerprints to those on the weapon. To do this you have to leave some traps – for example, leaving an object in the vicinity of a suspect (which they will doubtless pick up) enables you to match prints. It's sneaky as hell, but that's half the fun.

Murder is a big game, and one that will take a long time to learn how to play to its fullest. Logical thinking is essential, along with masses and masses of notes. Aspiring Clouseau's might well kill for it.

● Tony Dillon

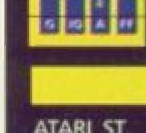
PLOTTING

OCEAN drop a brick...



The less than stunning visuals and sound detract from the instant appeal, but you soon find yourself getting into the game. However, the challenge soon dulls, and the game slowly finds its way to the back of the shelf.

ACE RATING
710



ATARI ST

Insofar as aesthetics go, Plotting doesn't really break any boundaries. The display is clean and simple, but a little dull looking. The obligatory cute sprite does enough bouncing and eyeball rolling to be eyecatching, but graphics do not a game make. It plays nicely, but it doesn't really hold the same joystick-wrenching feel as, say, Tetris. Nice, but there is better.

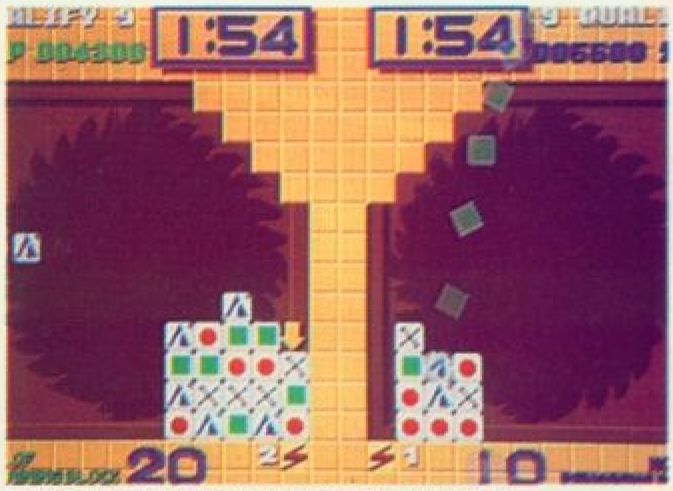
RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£19.95dk	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£24.95dk	OUT NOW

No other versions planned

Plotting is a simple puzzle game that's nevertheless very tricky in play. In front of you are between 25 and 36 bricks, each marked with one of four designs. You control a little brick carrying potato-like figure, whose aim is to get the number of tiles down to a preset figure by demolishing them. Destroying the bricks is a matter of throwing the one you're currently holding against one of the same pattern. This results in the next brick of a different pattern past the one you destroy flying back into your open hands leaving you to wipe out another.

It sounds easy, but there is one snag. If there are no 'smashable' bricks of the same denomination of the brick you are holding, you lose one of your three lives. The upshot of this is that you have to plan pretty far ahead to ensure that you don't paint yourself into a corner. After a while, obstacles start appearing to stop you from firing in certain places and things get very hairy indeed.



In the middle of a hectic two play game. The arrows tell you where your block will hit if you deflect it off the ceiling.

Along with the main game, you get a construction set but the simplicity of the game design is somewhat restricting when it came to creating original screens. For example, there are very strict boundaries as to where you can place blocks and obstructions. For a construction set, you just don't have enough freedom.

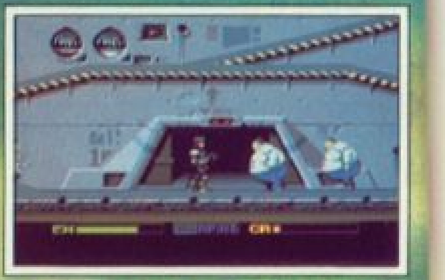
Plotting doesn't hold as much in the way of lasting appeal as some other puzzlers. It's difficult to say why, but at the end of the day that magic X-factor that a puzzle game needs to maintain interest simply isn't there. The challenge is there alright, but it just doesn't retain its appeal for long enough.

● Tony Dillon

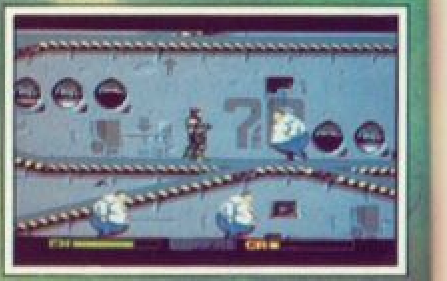
JUDGE DREDD

I AM THE LAW

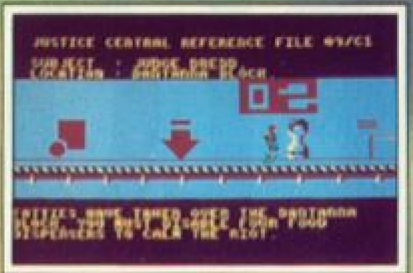
JUDGE
D.POWER



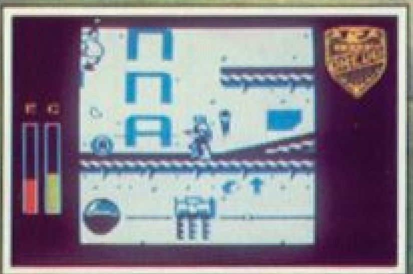
AMIGA • £19.99



ATARI ST • £19.99



AMSTRAD • DISK £14.99
AMSTRAD • CASS £9.99



SPECTRUM +3 • DISK £14.99
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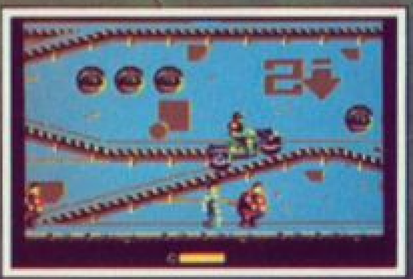

CBM 64 • DISK £14.99
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Virgin
GAMES

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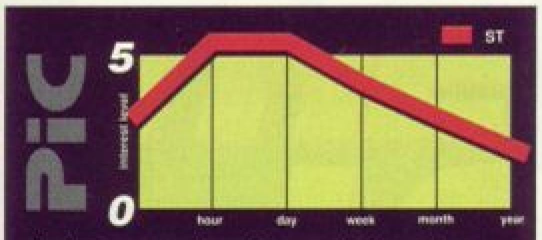
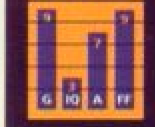


Simulcra is an apparently complex game on first acquaintance, but after a few goes you soon change your ideas. The gameplay is both absorbing and exciting and is going to keep you hooked for some time. In the long term, however, the frustration of not having a password system to enter the higher levels (there are thirty of them) is going to limit enjoyment (but see note in version box below).

ACE RATING

936



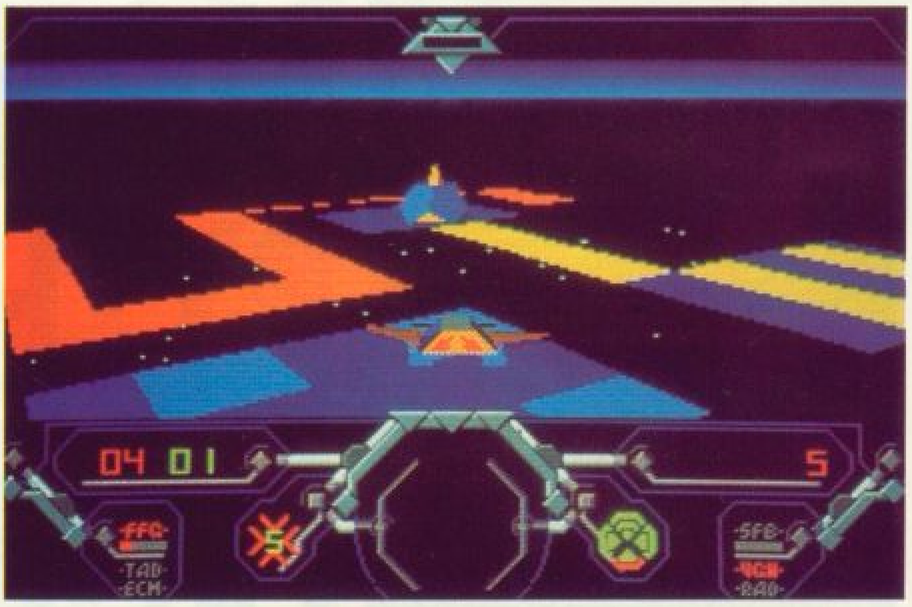
ATARI ST

Excellent. Highly recommended to shoot-em-up fans and to ordinary gamesters too. The graphics are perfect – not too pretty pretty but with every pixel giving its all to the gameplay. The version we tested was complete, but after hearing our reservations about the lack of a password system (see PIC Comment above) Microprose said that if time and RAM allowed a level access system might be implemented.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	OCT 90
AMIGA	£24.99	OCT 90

No other versions planned



Simulcra uses a grid-based map similar to *Virus* but includes 'blank' squares, introducing ground-based and flight action

SIMULCRA

MICROSTYLE hurls you into the computer war of the future and produce a red hot 3D shoot-em-up as an incentive...

Cyberscape rules in the far future, where even war is played out inside massive computer simulators. A particularly unpleasant virus has, however, had the effect of projecting the combat into the real world and as a result you have hordes of bloodthirsty simulcraft pilots wreaking havoc all over the place. Your objective is to enter the 'battle matrix' and destroy the other craft as well as the matrix itself.

You control a sophisticated Suface Reconnaissance Vehicle (SRV) with swing wings that give it limited flight capabilities. You drive your SRV around the matrix, encountering every so often a thin red line that denotes an energy barrier beyond which you cannot pass. You must then locate the relevant energy projector and destroy it, which will lift the barrier and allow you to proceed.

Simulcra is verging on the awesome, conjuring up immediate comparisons with the classic *Virus*. Your SRV rotates 360 degrees and can fly or drive. The rotation and shading are excellent and the game has a great feeling of speed. Battle is fast and furious and you can power up the SRV with loads of goodies including speed-ups, radar, fire and forget missiles, target display systems, shields, and extra lives.

The result is a fast paced 3D shoot-em-up that is slightly similar to *Resolution 101* in gameplay terms but blends in elements of *Falcon* and *Virus* as well. In addition, the grid construction introduces a maze element. Sound effects are superb and add to the sensation of speed. There's also a wonderful intro sequence.

Just what a game should be: looks good, sounds good, and plays like a dream.

● **Chris Morley**

ALL OUT WAR

To add variety to an already exciting game, Microstyle have thrown in a wide variety of enemies. First, and most common, are the laser turrets that slowly sweep in a complete circle until they lock onto you, whereupon they fire viciously. Various ground and air attack craft, such as jeeps and small tanks, race around the walkways, thankfully needing only one shot to kill. Then you reach the megatanks – these can only be killed with missiles, but when shot explode in the most satisfactory way yet, by first ejecting the gun turret and then collapsing in on themselves with a terrific sound effect.

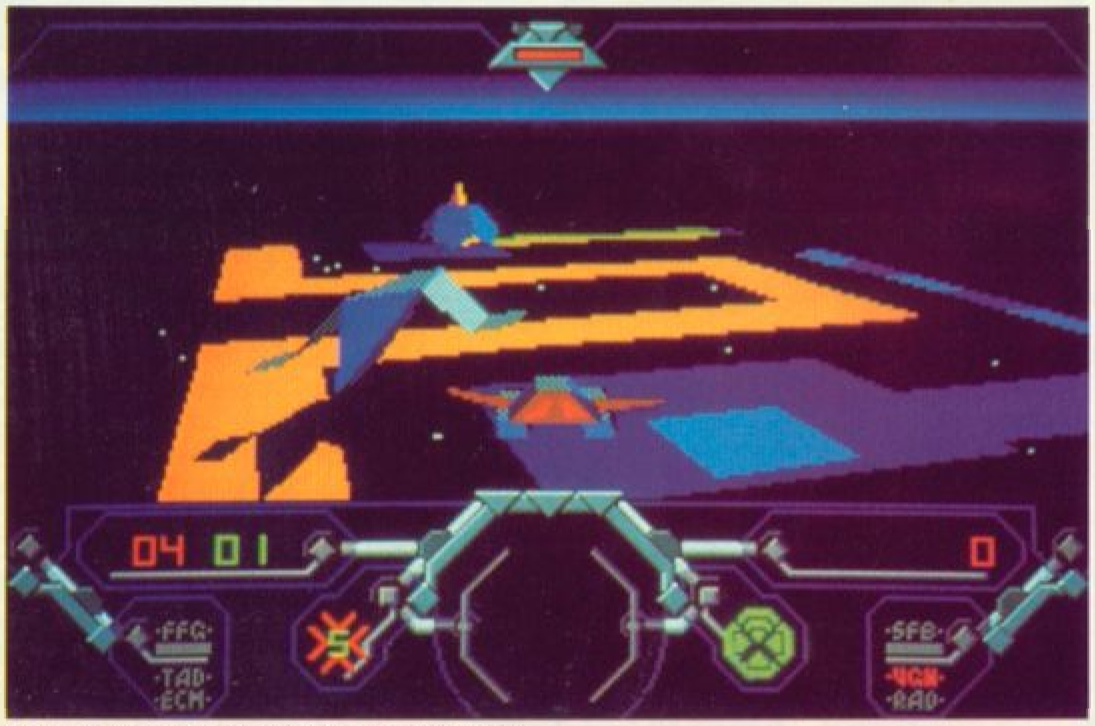
Throughout the game you also have access to a map screen for strategic planning – and there's also a neat power-up that gives you short range mapping/radar facilities while you're moving.

TECHNO PORN!

The 3D vector graphics system in *Simulcra* features solid filled 3D graphics with shadows and light intensity surfaces. The system allows solid and wireframe surfaces to be freely mixed. Stipple and transparent/semi-transparent surfaces are also employed.

The game code runs up to 252 non player objects on the map. The game cycle rate and the view cycle are independent so that game time can be kept more or less constant even if the display rate is slowed down.

Special explosion effects are achieved using a highly efficient particle controller that individually moves up to 100 particles. Definitely a game that goes with a bang!

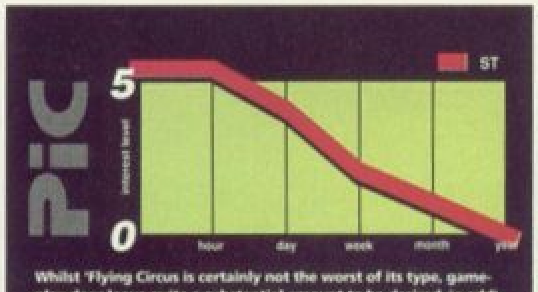


Solid graftgold with 252 non-player objects and 100 particles!

MONTY PYTHON'S FLYING CIRCUS

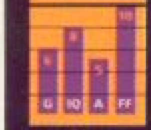
Gumby loses his mind

Encounter death, persecution, and fluffy pillows as VIRGIN introduces the first game where successful players get *lower* scores



Whilst 'Flying Circus is certainly not the worst of its type, gameplay does leave quite a substantial amount to be desired, in addition to which the sampled effects and cartoon sequences which help to sustain that initial interest,are limited to the 16-bit machines.Try before you buy.

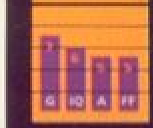
ACE RATING **690**



AMIGA

Initial interest may be held by the humour element, supported by very pleasing aesthetics, and whilst the Amiga version is the best of the lot, this seems due to machine capability rather than gameplay and as such,the game will still be of limited appeal to any but Python fans. At the end of the day, however, and when all is said and done, which it usually is, and fundamentally speaking, it IS a very silly version.

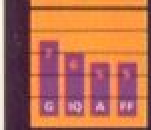
ACE RATING **650**



ATARI ST

Although playing identically to the Amiga version, the ST version of 'Flying Circus suffers slightly from somewhat below par sampled effects, with significant background interference although this does not detract from the gameplay by any means. Other than this small niggle, both 16-bit versions are comparable to one another.

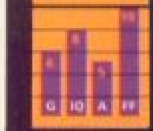
ACE RATING **645**



SPECTRUM

Suffering from the same gameplay problems as the Amiga version with the added disadvantage of monochrome graphics. Sadly, the 8-bit machine also loses out on the cartoon sequences and the sound samples too are only notable for their absence. However, the quality of the caricatures is well preserved and what sound effects there are fit the game well.

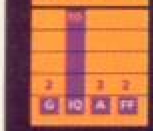
ACE RATING **590**



AMSTRAD CPC

A bit disappointing this one. It lacks the aesthetic appeal of the 16-bit versions because of simplistic graphics and garish use of colour. Very silly. Especially as it makes the characters unrecognisable at times. Even sillier. Couple all this with a lack of samples and some rather basic sound effects and you get a game for mice, not men. Or is that men, not mice. And why hasn't the doctor called yet? Aha! I *am* the doctor...

ACE RATING **999**



SPAM 1

Probably the silliest version of the lot. The copy protection system, involving a small metal key, almost always results in either a fatal system crash or – in some cases – mice. Once into the game, the limitations of the round-edged, cubic format become immediately apparent and lasting interest is considerably reduced by the appearance of green mould. Great sandwich, shame about the game.

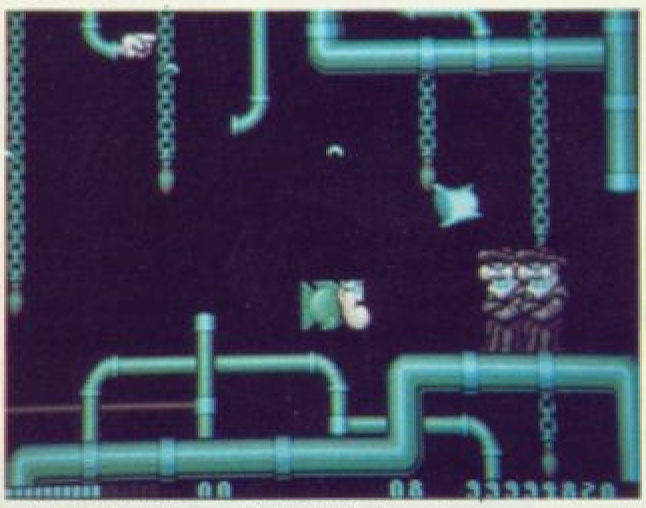
RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£19.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£19.99	IMMINENT
IBM PC	£24.99	IMMINENT
AMSTRAD CPC	£9.99cs £14.99dk	IMMINENT
C64/128	£9.99cs £14.99dk	IMMINENT
SPECTRUM	£9.99cs £14.99dk	IMMINENT
SPAM 1	£9.99xj £14.99pq	MAYBE

No other versions planned

Dead parrots, spam, lumberjacks, and the Spanish Inquisition set the scene for this licensed spin-off from the '70s TV series once regarded by the BBC as having absolutely no chance of commercial success.

The plot revolves around one of Python's much loved characters, the moustachioed D.P Gumby, complete with knotted handkerchief on top, who is searching for four separate pieces of his brain, tragically lost during routine surgery. Despite the fact that the brains themselves are quite content to lead their own successful lives, Gumby is determined to retrieve them in a vain attempt to further his dreams and ambitions.



The Spanish Inquisition – you're being pelted with deadly fluffy pillows

Plot aside, the game itself requires you to guide Gumby through four levels of scrolling landscape blasting all in your path and collecting various objects along the way. Aggravation comes in the form of characters from various Python sketches (such as Norman the Half-Bee, Upper-Class Twits and the aforementioned dead parrot), whilst collectables take the form of eggs, sausages (used to replenish Gumby's energy) and the inevitable Spam. Spam is the key to Gumby's quest – every sixteen tins collected gets you one of the four pieces of brain.

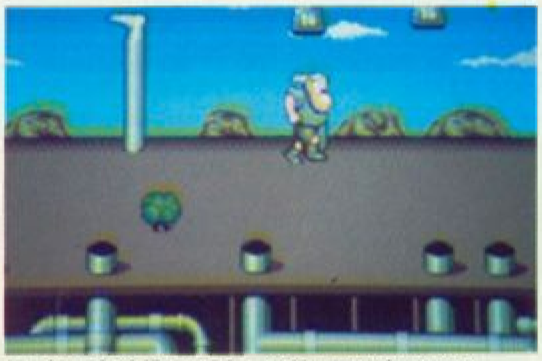
At the end of each level, food collected is counted down for bonus points, whilst 16-bit versions of the game allow you to engage in a pointless argument with a Minister for Pointless Arguments for an extra bonus, (achieved by moving the joystick in the opposite direction to that which the Minister's speech bubble appears).

The scoring system is in keeping with the overall feel of the game in that your score begins at 99,999,999 and actually counts down , extra lives being gained for every 10,000,000 points lost !

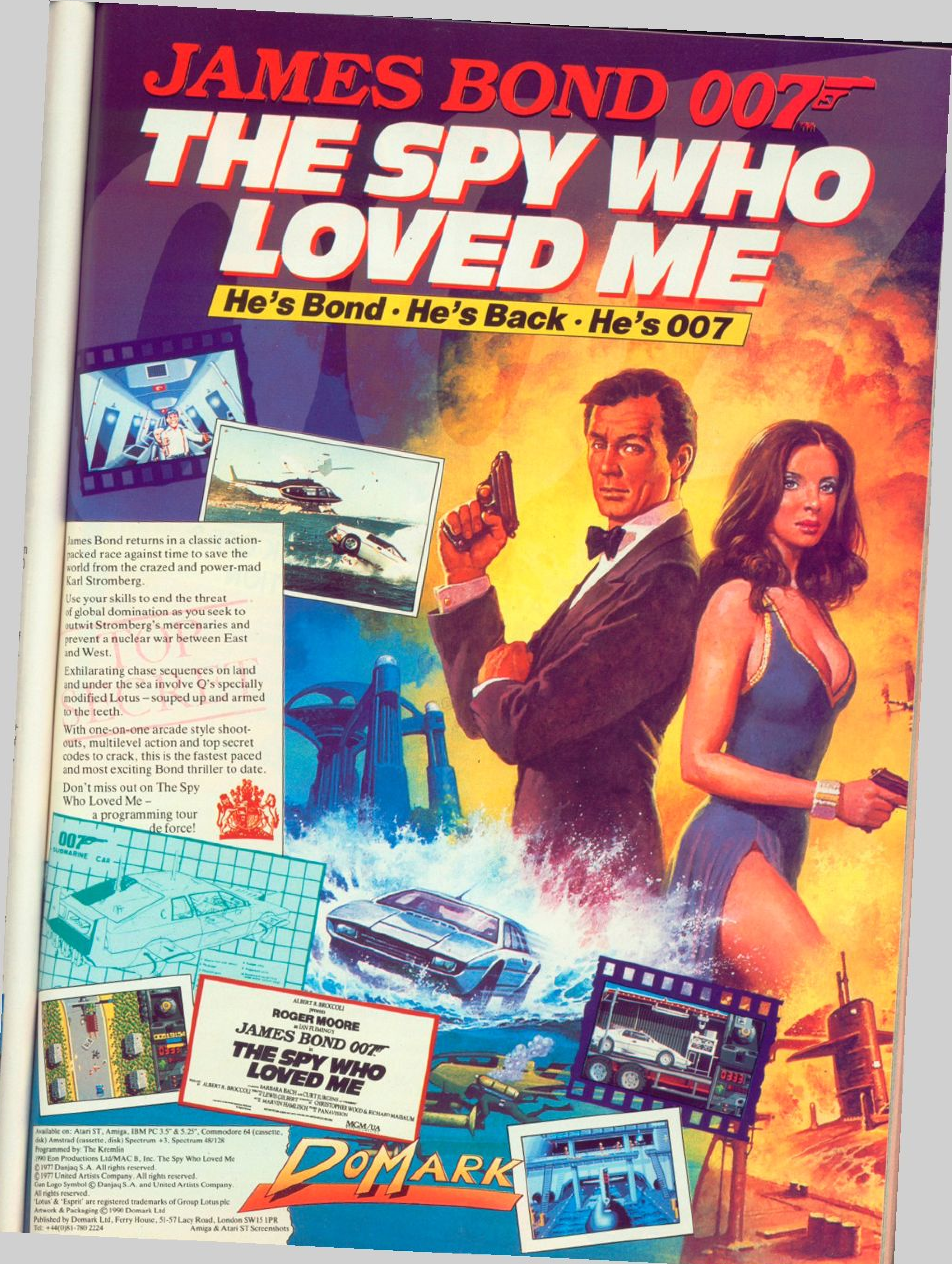
Immediately the game begins you are required to pass through what Virgin have dubbed a "Cheeselok" protection system – enter the correct names for two out of sixteen cheeses or the game locks up. Having passed through this, you are then treated to a sample of John Cleese's voice welcoming you to "Monty Python's Flying Circus". Sound is of a high quality throughout, with several well sampled effects and pieces of dialogue taken directly from the series, whilst graphics, although not perhaps the greatest ever witnessed on the Amiga convey the cartoon quality of Terry Gilliam's animations to a tee. Indeed, cartoons play a large part in the game itself as 16-bit versions are interspersed with excellent sketches from the series, (although these have the ability to be turned off along with sound in the event of annoyance).

However, graphics and sound do not a classic make and whilst perhaps initially aesthetically pleasing, *Flying Circus* delivers nothing new on the gameplay front.

● Alex Ruranski



Watch out for falling weights. And just to make matters worse, you're being followed by a nervous bush ...


007
SUBMARINE CAR
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as IAN FLEMING'S
JAMES BOND 007
in
THE SPY WHO LOVED ME
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MGM/UA
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JAMES BOND 007

THE SPY WHO LOVED ME

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Use your skills to end the threat of global domination as you seek to outwit Stromberg's mercenaries and prevent a nuclear war between East and West.

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Don't miss out on The Spy Who Loved Me – a programming tour de force!

Available on: Atari ST, Amiga, IBM PC 3.5" & 5.25", Commodore 64 (cassette, disk) Amstrad (cassette, disk) Spectrum +3, Spectrum 48/128
Programmed by: The Kremlin
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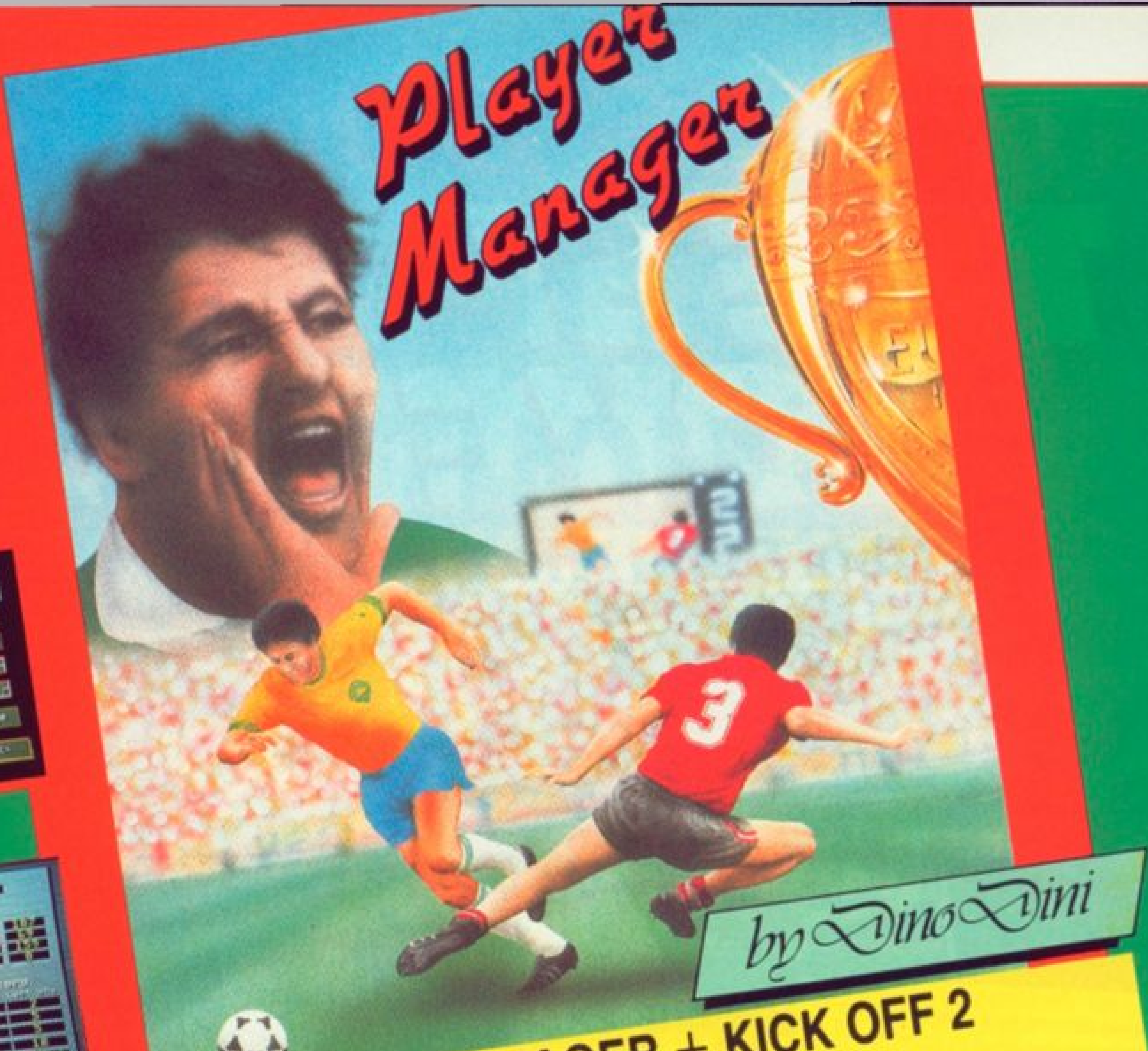
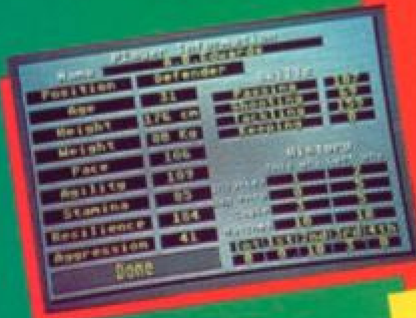
Amiga & Atari ST Screenshots





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A WINNING COMBINATION

Unique facility to design and implement your own tactics.
Over 1000 individual players, each with a unique combination of attributes and skills.
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4 division league and cup tournament with sudden death penalty shoot out.
Designed to integrate with KICK OFF 2 which has the options to load P.M.
designed tactics. 1 to 8 individual Player Manager teams can be loaded for
a single game, league or cup tournament.

AND A LOT MORE

AMIGA £19.95
ST £19.95

ST ACTION: The presentation has to be the best I have ever seen in any management game. Combining the compelling game play of Kick Off with the strategy of team management was a stroke of pure genius.

THE ONE: Player Manager is an exceptional football management simulation. It has astounding depth: an unmatched 1000 individual players, the ability to radically alter formation and team tactics – just about everying you would find in real football. Player Manager is the most involved, rewarding and playable games of its type.

THE ACE: The beauty of the Player Manager is that it successfully blends a challenging soccer management game with the frantic end to end arcade action of Kick Off. Designers have been trying to marry arcade footy with management for years-almost always failing abysmally. Player Manager brings it off in style.

NEW COMPUTER EXPRESS: The sheer depth of Player Manager is incredible. Almost every conceivable element of running and playing in a football team has been implemented including Kick Off. Anco has produced what has to be a difinitive Manager game.

COMMODORE USER: One of the most impressive options yet seen on a managerial game and the keystone to the addictiveness and involvement of this game is Tactics option. P.M. lets you plan all your set pieces just the way you want them. You will never be able to say you aren't in full control of the game. At last a management game that requires true management skills. Add to this most addictive arcade soccer game ever – a winner.

AMIGA FORMAT: The mix between management and arcade is the best to have appeared in any football game. You will be playing it for months: there is so much to do.

ZZAP: An incredible realistic simulation of every aspect of football.

ANCO

ANCO SOFTWARE, UNIT 10, BURNHAM TRADING ESTATE, LAWSON ROAD, DARTFORD, KENT.
TELEPHONE No: 0322 92513/92518 FAX No: 0322 93422

SILENT SERVICE II

MICROPROSE runs silent, deep and deadly

From its very outset, *Silent Service II* is typically Microprose: vast scenario, hugely complex gameplay and intense attention to detail. If ever there was a game that demanded significantly more than fast reflexes and a happy trigger finger, this is it.

Set against the historical backdrop of World War II, the program gives you the opportunity of recreating, in whole or in part, the career of a US submarine officer. This represents anything from thirty minutes to hundreds of hours of game time, supported by a 128 page manual, keyboard overlay with 70 commands, and dozens of mission possibilities.

Once through the obligatory security check (where you must correctly identify one of eleven Japanese warships), you are met with a massive array of options. The first of these presents you with four distinct game scenarios (see Battle Stations); others include selecting one of four difficulty levels (ranging from the complete novice, to the 'Ultimate' player), starting date for engagement, submarine class (the latter two options are vital to one anotheras the chosen date dictates the sophistication of the submarine allowed) and even torpedo type!

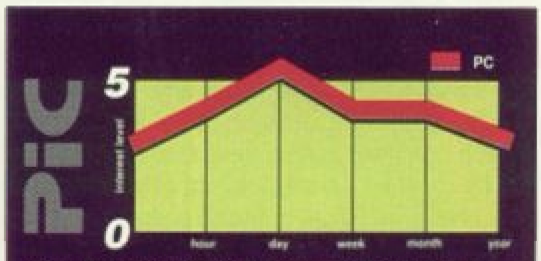
Subsequent options presented to the player during the game depend heavily upon those chosen at the outset, leading to many possible situations. A typical battle scenario can involve close combat with dozens of marauding Japanese warships at short range, giving rise to much panic on the part of the player! Gameplay tends to alternate between the Bridge Screen (where you sight your targets) and the Map Screen which enables you to make more long term strategic decisions.

Apart from actually controlling your ship, there are numerous intermission scenes ranging from seeing your torpedoes launched to monitoring the Captain's Log.

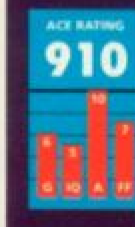
Aesthetically, *Silent Service II* is of a high standard throughout with digitised illustrative screens and well drawn, easily readable displays. In addition to this, each enemy ship is portrayed from a digitised photograph in any one of 24 perspectives for added feel.

One minor niggle involves continual disk access, in that accidentally pressing a key can involve waiting while the machine goes through its paces, although the ability to turn off certain animation screens helps solve this. That apart, *Silent Service II* is a must for all fans, and a worthy successor to the original, which has now sold so well that it is being converted to console!

• Alex Ruranski



With such a vast array of options and several difficulty settings, the game caters for both the complete novice and the hardened expert, providing the potential for literally hundreds of hours of absorbing play. Slow to get into due to the complexity, but for the dedicated player there's months of long term interest.



IBM PC

Supports VGA/MCGA CGA and EGA graphics, whilst sound options are supported by the Ad Lib and Roland MT-32 Sound units including digitised speech. Apart from the disk access, the game makes excellent use of the PC and has all the right ingredients you'd expect from the successor to what was previously THE submarine sim.

RELEASE DETAILS

IBM PC	£39.99	OUT NOW

No other versions planned at present.

BATTLE STATIONS

The four scenarios in *SSII* should keep even the most ardent skipper busy for months to come.

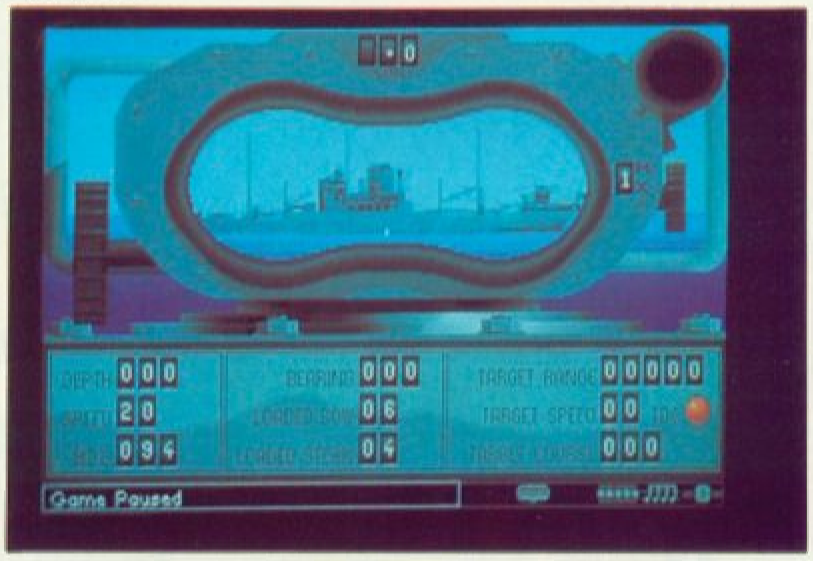
First, TRAINING involves simple cruise and attack sequence in the vicinity of four unarmed freighter hulks. Its purpose is to familiarise you with the craft, the manual and the controls.

Then, there's SINGLE COMBAT, which isn't actually single at all, but drops you into one of nine engagements, eight of which are historically based. The ninth is a random encounter with a Japanese force.

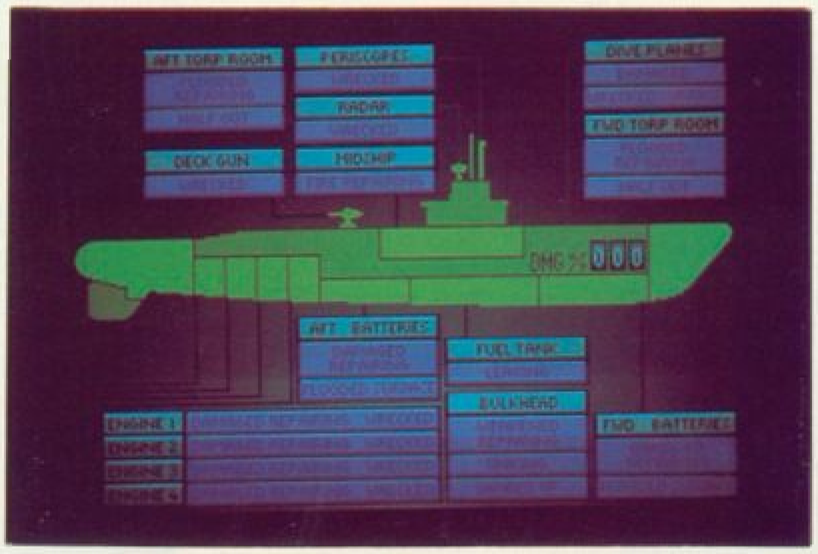
SINGLE WAR PATROL propels you into the Western Pacific, hunting down the opposition, engaging them and returning to base.

Finally, there's the big one – a complete WAR CAREER. You join as a Skipper at any time during WW2, sail a series of war patrols in one or more boats, and finish up in either the grave or the victory parade. Microprose claims this final option could involve literally hundreds of hours of gameplay if you start at the beginning of the war in 1941.

All options pit you against Japan – America's mortal enemy after the raid on Pearl Harbour in 1941 until the end of the war following the atomic bombings of 1945. The struggle with Japan sprawled across the western half of the Pacific and among America's "Silent Service" heroes were men with silly names like "Mush" Morton, Dick O'Kane and Red Ramage! Now you can join them...



The Bridge Screen. Although this is where you sight your target, you can also access all pertinent information systems from this screen.



Damage control reports are comprehensive. Rapid action is neede if reparable damage is not to become an irreparable disaster

PROFESSOR MARIARTI

KRYSALIS send you blasting and puzzling into a mad professor's laboratory

Professor Mariarti has been instructed by Local Government and, as the Prof, you have to race about the flip screen map solving any problems in typical platform-game style. Your objective on each of the five levels is to reach the switch and cut the power. The problems are based around using particular objects in particular situations, such as wearing a divers helmet in a pressurised room.

Wandering about the rooms of the labs are the Prof's creations, which range from the predictable (marauding robots) to more exotic pools of roaming slime. These can be either stunned or destroyed, depending on the creature and/or which weapon you are currently carrying. They don't disappear for long though, so this only really serves as a short breather.

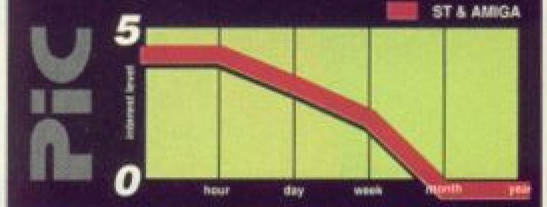
Platform games need to be pretty spectacular these days to make any headway. Krisalis wanted "...a game that had a hint of familiarity to it. Platform games are one of the most overdone genres of game, and we wanted a game that people could relate to. After all, one game I still play is Manic Miner!"

Unfortunately, *Mariarti* has a fair few shortcomings. First off, there's the simplicity of the puzzles. It doesn't take an O Level in Egg Boiling to work out that the way to get past an electrified grid is to switch off the machine next to it.

There are one or two playability problems as well. The most frustrating is the double jump, obtained by keeping the joystick in the required direction. Unless you're very careful, this often results in you jumping onto a platform or ladder, and then leaping straight off again.

With a bit more spit and polish in the design department, *Mariarti* could have been great. As it stands now, it's only good for an hour or two on Sunday lunchtime.

● **Tony Dillon**



An attractive game initially, and one that is very easy to pick up. However, as you start making progress, frustration with the playability sets in – especially the double-jump. The simplicity of the game also means that it doesn't take long to work your way through it. Not the most lasting of products.

ACE RATING
645

AMIGA

Graphically identical to its ST counterpart, the Amiga version is only marginally improved by the horizontal scrolling and the improved sampled sounds. Vertical movement is still flip screen, and the same playability problems occur. Pity, really – the idea of bringing out a really red-hot platform scenario for the Amiga is very appealing.

ACE RATING
630

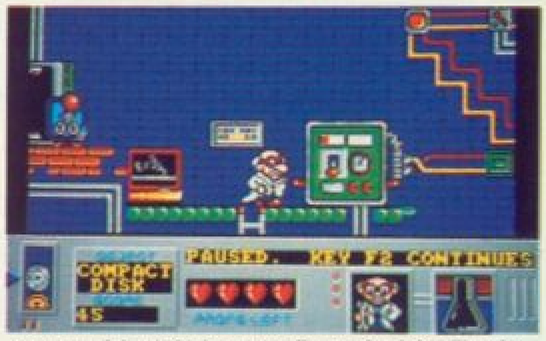
ATARI ST

Bright and clean graphics, but there is very little distinction between the fore- and background, making it very hard at times to spot platforms. The real letdown is the four-way flip screen, which often causes death as you step onto a new screen and straight into the arms of a passing alien. Otherwise a rather unexceptional platform scenario.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£19.99	OUT NOW
AMIGA	£19.99	OUT NOW

No other versions planned



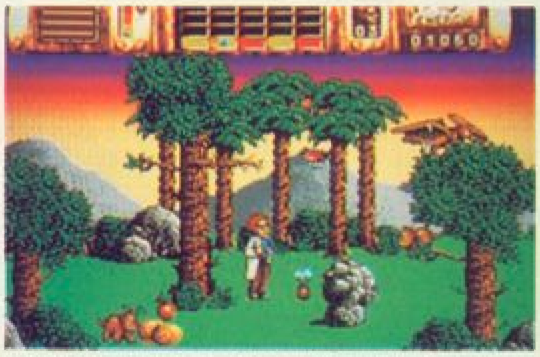
'A very useful switch' the game tells you...but is it telling the truth?

TIME MACHINE

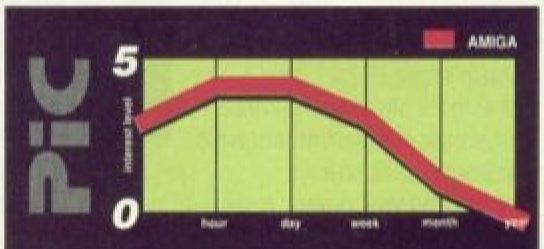
Zany professor puzzler from ACTIVISION

Professor Potts is working on his time machine when terrorists strike and blow it to smithereens. The unfortunate Potts is hurtled back in time warp and must use his ingenuity to recreate history, return to his own era, and stop the terrorists in their tracks.

You control the Professor with your joystick as he wanders around prehistoric forests, swamps and jungles trying to figure a way back to his own era, 10 million years in the future. You've got two useful gadgets to help you – a couple of teleportation pods to move around with and a zapper to stun creatures and dislodge objects.

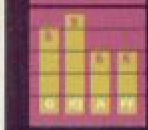


Your teleporting units can switch you instantly between two locations, together with any object in your immediate vicinity. Here you're capturing livestock to develop into cavemen.



High initial attraction due to the attractive graphics and animation grows higher as you appreciate the originality of the scenario. After a day, however, you're likely to have got the hang of the game and be tackling the trickier puzzles. Repetitive gameplay then begins to frustrate until the final solution KO's the interest level...

ACE RATING
800



AMIGA

Graphics are extremely attractive, with prehistoric lifeforms showing the distinct influence of 20th century cute. Sound is nothing to sing about. Control methods are slightly annoying as they involve constant use of both joystick and keyboard, as you often have to move through time and space simultaneously. Otherwise absorbing and original.

RELEASE DETAILS

ATARI ST	£24.99	IMMINENT
AMIGA	£24.99	OUT NOW
C64/128	£14.99	IMMINENT

No other versions planned

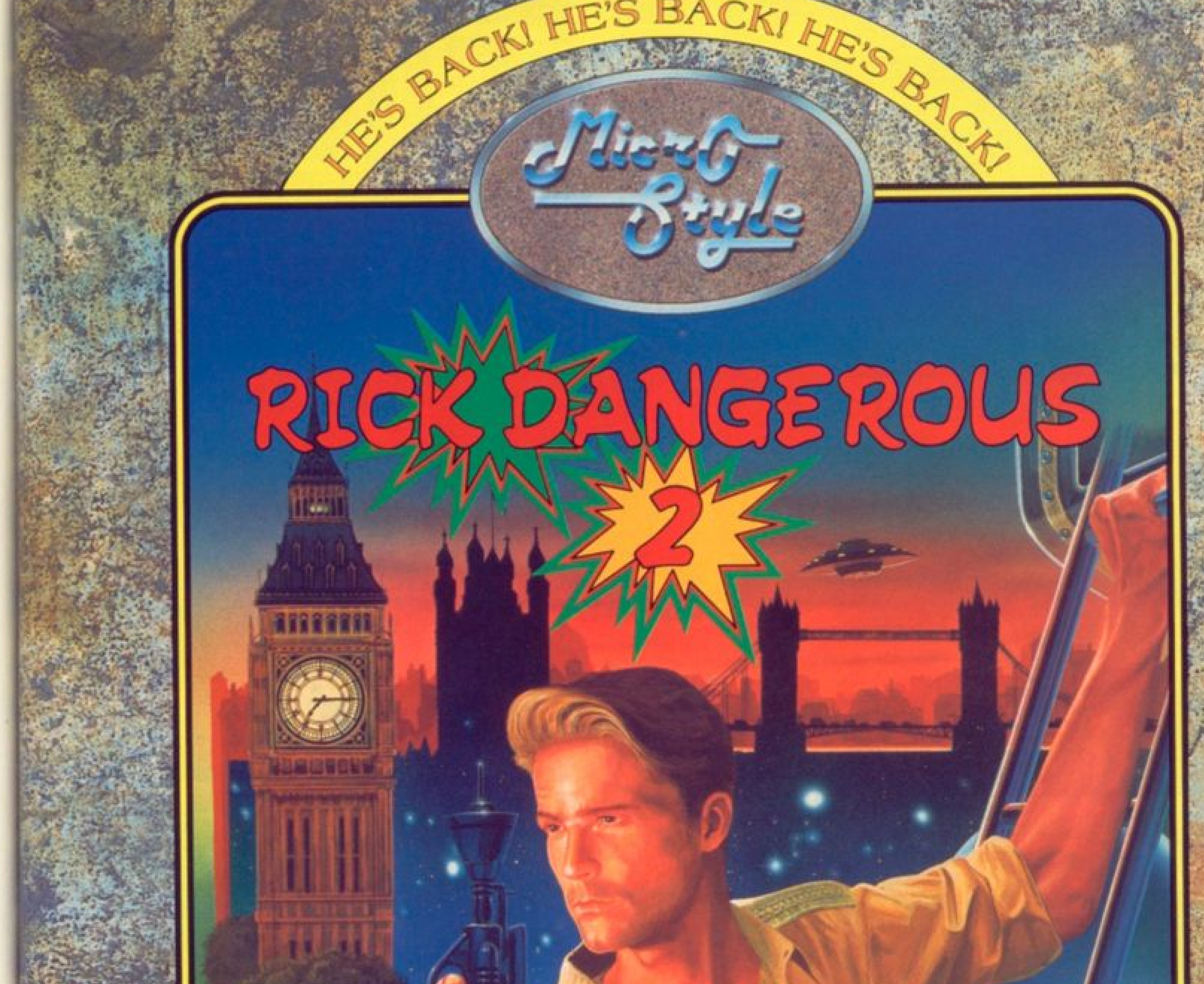
World history in this game is divided into five zones, each with five screens showing a single location from a wraparound map. If you can help along the course of evolution in one zone, you'll gain access to the next and so on until you reach the present day.

Time Machine is a tough brain teaser involving constant movement between different locations and time zones to solve the puzzles. For example, a bridge over a river in one time zone can only be constructed using an object from another area in another zone. Live is made more difficult by constant hazards that not only threaten your energy levels but may also undo your work, causing a time zone to 'collapse' and forcing you to start all over again.

Graphically, *Time Machine* is nicely presented, with colourful scenes of the various zones from prehistoric swamps, right up to the Professor's laboratory compound. The Prof himself is a classic boffin with white coat and flaming red Einstein hairstyle, and he moves around the scenery in the usual joystick assisted way.

The challenge of this game is almost entirely confined to puzzle solving, and some of them are extremely difficult. Super resourceful whizzkids might make short work of the game, and be done with it , but more average brains like me will find it a real teaser and be hooked for quite a while. Once cracked, however, it will hold no further interest at all.

● **Ivan Hawksley**


HE'S BACK! HE'S BACK! HE'S BACK! HE'S BACK!
MicroStyle
RICK DANGEROUS
2

Rick Dangerous II.
The Man in the Hat is Back..
IN A FLASH !

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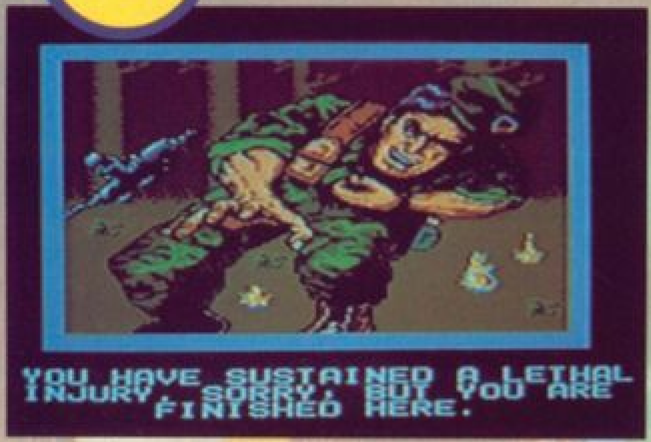
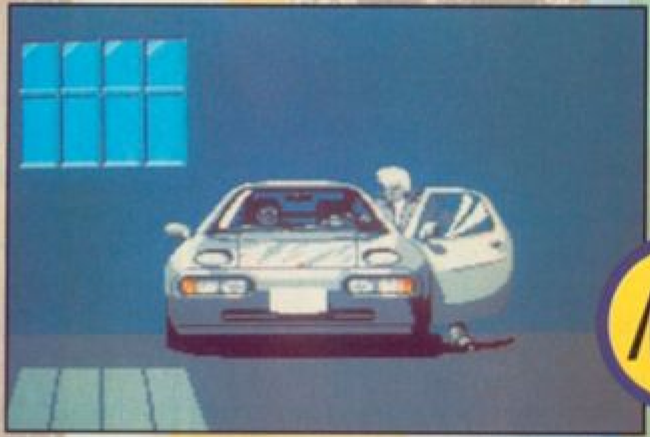
NEW


YOU HAVE SUSTAINED A LETHAL INJURY. SORRY, BUT YOU ARE FINISHED HERE.

OPERATION WOLF £29.99

NEW



CHASE HQ £29.99

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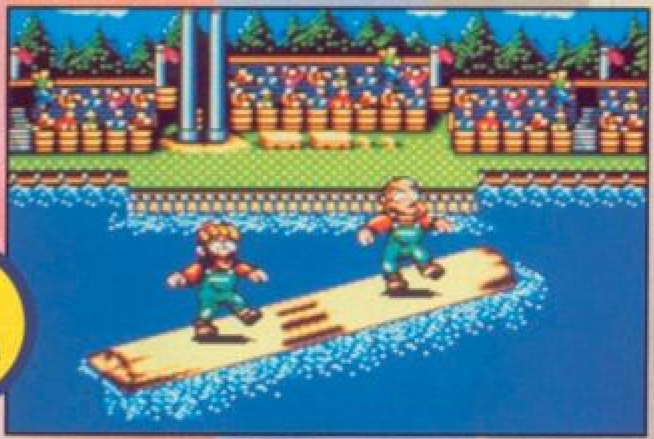
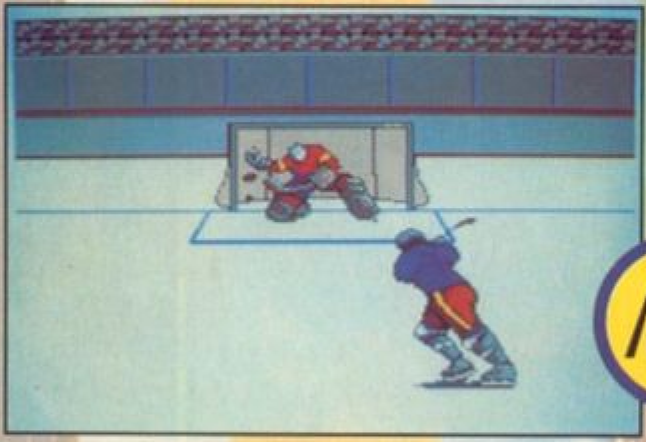


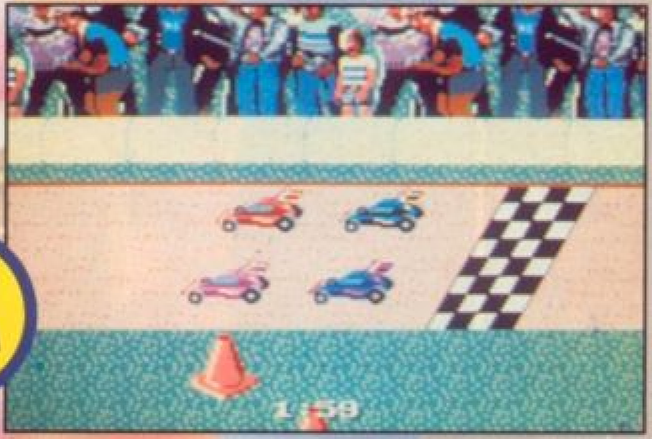
WORLD GAMES £24.99

NEW



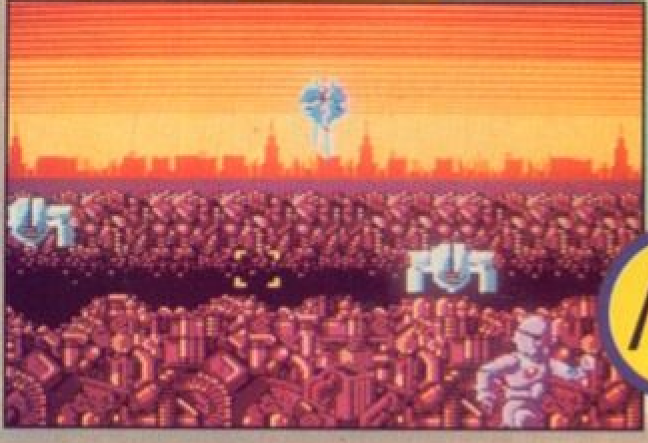
SLAP SHOT £29.99

NEW



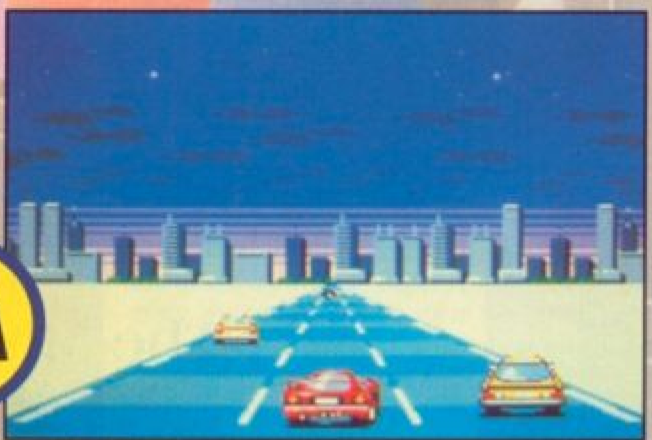
RC GRAND PRIX £29.99

NEW



ASSAULT CITY £29.99

NEW



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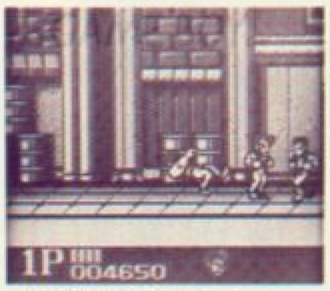


Kicking butt in DOUBLE DRAGON.

TECHNOS kicks it on the Gameboy

DOUBLE DRAGON

Forget teenage tortoises, take control of Billy – the baseball bat bruiser – in this quest to rescue his girlfriend from the Black Warriors street gang.

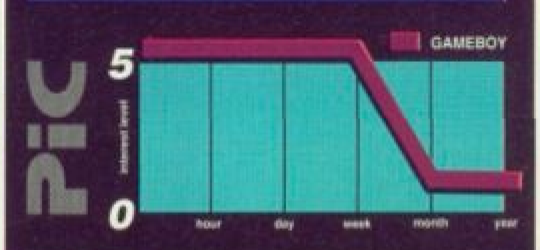
Double Dragon, the popular martial arts coin-op, has been converted over to Gameboy. Split into four missions, you travel the city slums, warehouse and forest to reach your final destination – the hideout. Along the way you meet and dispatch whip wielding women, knife throwing punks and various heavy duty 'boss' dudes.

The Gameboy version is much easier to play. Unlike the original coin-op you automatically get the full force of martial manoeuvres: punch, uppercut, elbow punch, over the shoulder throw, kick, jump kick, low kick, kick in the head and spin kick. Your opponents aren't quite as tough as their arcade parents. Guys like Abobo, Lopar, Chintai and The Williams can be taken out with minimum motion. You still pick up weapons like the knife, baseball bat and grenade to distribute some destruction. A link-up option lets you simultaneously kick ass with a friend – provided they've also got a Gameboy and copy of the game.

Double Dragon is the nearest a beat'em-up game has come to a martial arts movie. Get set for some serious slapping.

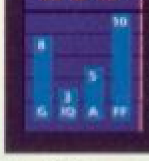
● **Rik Haynes**

Gameboy £29.99cart Out Now



ACE RATING

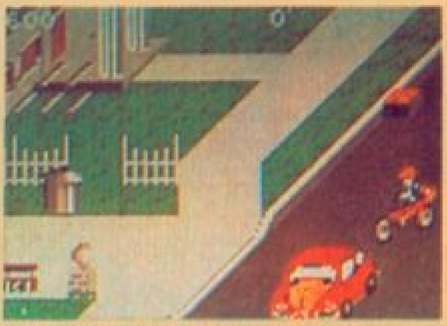
863



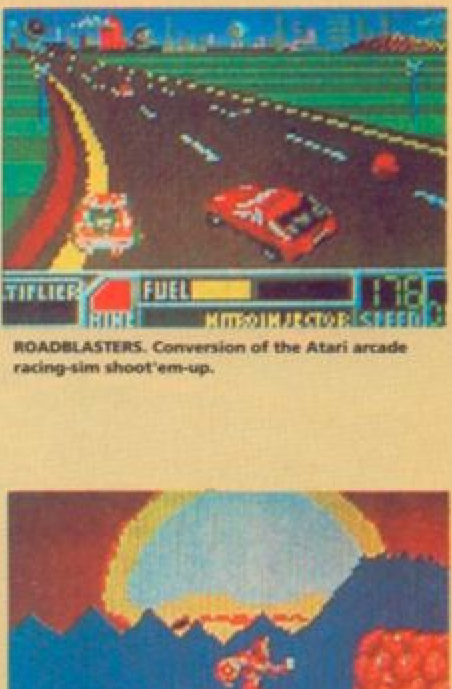
Double Dragon is easily the best beat'em-up released on the Gameboy thus far. Sprite and backdrop graphics are intricate with a high degree of detail. Boss sprites are big, the vertical and horizontal scrolling is smooth. Soundtracks can become rather irritating, but the sound effects have punchy impact. Sure, this version is easy to complete – but you'll have lots of fun in the process. The link-up mode is just beyond the beat. *Double Dragon* – get ready to take it out!

LYNX FOUR-PLAY

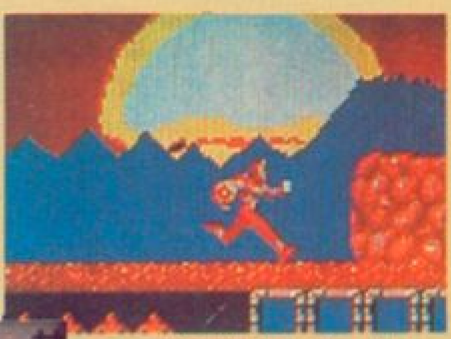
Special thanks to ASCII Corporation.



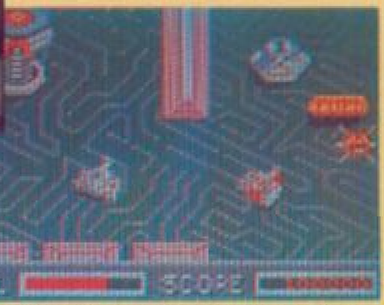
PAPERBOY. Looking larger than life and very colourful.



ROADBLASTERS. Conversion of the Atari arcade racing-sim shoot'em-up.



RYGAR. Hip hack and scrolling slash.



VINDICATORS. Tengen tanks drive through alien-infested mazes.

PAPERBOY

A new Gameboy delivery from MINDSCAPE

This baby has been doing the rounds for years, and very successfully doing the do too! Originally a hit coin-op from Atari, *Paperboy* has been converted to everything from the Spectrum to Lynx... and now the Gameboy.

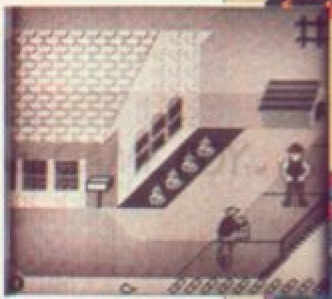
Delivering newspapers in the good old US of A is pretty treacherous for apprentice paperboys. Before you set out, you're shown a route plan displaying where your customers live. Then it's out onto the streets. Hey, be careful out there!

You score points by delivering papers to your customers, if you don't, they drop their subscription. This ain't good business, buddy. For bonus points you smash the windows of non-customers (unfortunately you don't see them break in the Gameboy version).

Like real-life, things aren't this simple. Various suburbian obstacles stand in the way of you collecting your pay cheque. Skateboarders, breakdancers, dogs, fences, manholes, cars, tombstones, fire hydrants, garbage cans, tornadoes and the grim reaper are there to lose you a life if you collide with them.

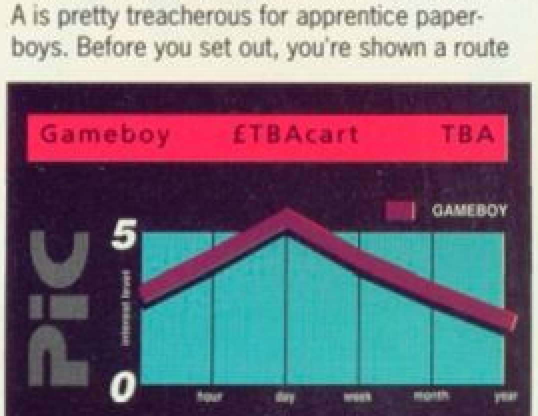
If you survive your round intact, a training course track helps you keep in trim for next mornings deliverys. Who said being a Paperboy is easy? If you can't cut it you can always work for a fast-food chain.

● **Rik Haynes**



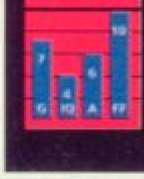
PAPERBOY is a unique game using Zaxxon-style pseudo-3D graphics on a 45° top-right to bottom-left scroll.

Gameboy £TBAcart TBA

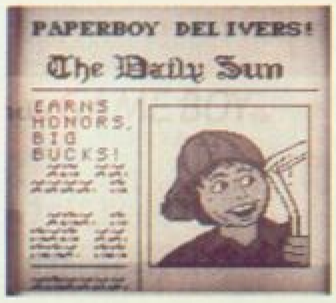


ACE RATING

816



A frolic through American suburbia. Paperboy has widespread appeal and a whole dose of humour. The diagonal-scrolling works well and your paperboy sprite peddles away like there's no tomorrow. In step with most Gameboy musical arrangements, Paperboy's tunes don't sound too good. Spot FX do the business in a squelchy sort of way. Gameboy control is a little difficult. *Paperboy* delivers everything it promises, it's just a pity your bike isn't fitted for urban defence.



PAPERBOY DELIVERS!

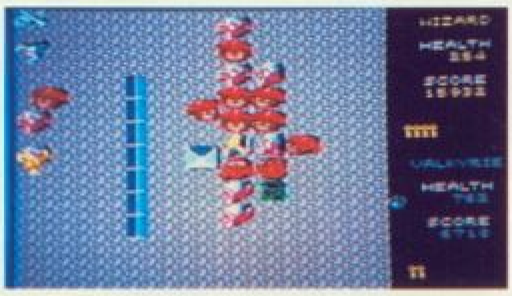
The Daily Sun

EARNS HONORS, BIG BUCKS!

Newspaper articles display your progress through PAPERBOY.

GAUNTLET

US GOLD attempts an amazing feat on the Sega Master System



Fighting the ghosts, demons and Dr Death in GAUNTLET.

When Atari launched this four-player coin-op back in 1985 it created a new arcade craze. People of all ages – and both sexes – could quickly master *Gauntlet's* easy to learn display, controls and tasks. An arcade sensation was started.

Everything is kept simple in *Gauntlet.* Choosing between an elf, wizard, valkyrie or warrior character – you wander round a maze searching for treasure and the nearest exit. Enter this exit and it's onto... yet another maze. There are 128 maze levels to master. Like most mazes, each is populated by monsters, tasty treasures and secret passages.

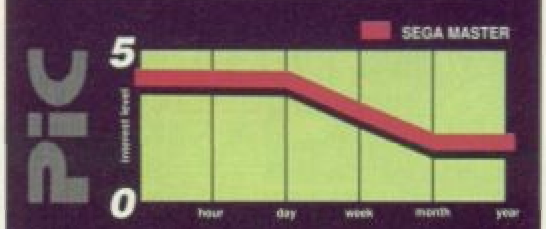
But boring it is not. In each maze you discover horrible beasties, ghoulies and demonies out to decrease your health rating. If this reaches zero, you're history. You keep the beasts at bay with your bow and arrow, sword, axe or wand – depending on the character you've chosen. You can also fight by hand – but this takes time and isn't as healthy. Help comes in the form of collectibles like magic potions to stun the suckers, food to boost your health, and keys to unlock gates. Don't be too greedy though, pigging out on the pick-ups can seriously damage your health. Every so often, you visit a treasure room – collecting as many cash chests as possible within the time limit.

Gauntlet graphics are displayed in a slightly off-beat overhead style. The screen scrolls smoothly in eight directions and a status display on the right shows your score, health and what collectibles you're carrying. Sprites are small but highly detailed. Sound supply is standard spot effects.

Two players can simultaneously play *Gauntlet.* You can either assist or hinder your colleague. If you want a laugh, do both. The Sega Master version contains a few changes to the coin-op. Instead of individual player speeds you get differing rates of fire, and the thief has been replaced by potion penalties. So what? Sega Master *Gauntlet* is an accurate conversion of a fun fantasy shoot'em-up. Go grab yourself some maze.

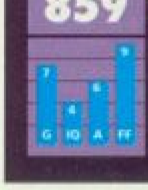
● **Rik Haynes**

Sega Master £24.99cart November



ACE RATING

859

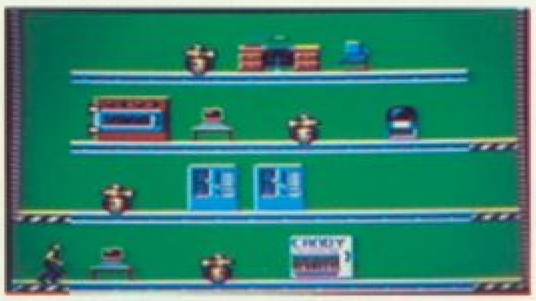


Despite its age, *Gauntlet* can still cut it. USG's Sega Master implementation is the best conversion on any home machine. The scrolling is fast and smooth, the sprites are colourful and detailed. Sound is slightly disappointing – most of the sampled speech extracts have been left out. I really miss the 'Wizard you're about to die' warning message. The simultaneous two-player option is a real bonus. Gauntlet has the right mix, put it on your Sega shortlist.

WIN A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE

***Gauntlet* on the Sega Master System was coded by a very capable chap. Tony Porter now has nine *Gauntlet* conversions in his programming portfolio. The game took six months to write using the standard Sega development kit – a PC with ICE (In-Circuit Emulator). "Sega Master *Gauntlet* is the best home version available including the 16-bit adaptions. Everything runs in 4/50th of a second – it's probably faster than the coin-op," states Porter. "Due to tight video chip access time, the monster illustrations don't run as fast as they ought to." Even so, there can be up to 160 monsters and 20 missiles on-screen at the same time.**

There is a secret cheat mode hidden in the Sega Master version of *Gauntlet*. The first ACE reader to find it will win a bottle of champagne courtesy of the generous Tony Porter – and he promises it won't be a cheap Albanian import. Send your entries to: CHAMPAGNE CHAMP, ACE, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

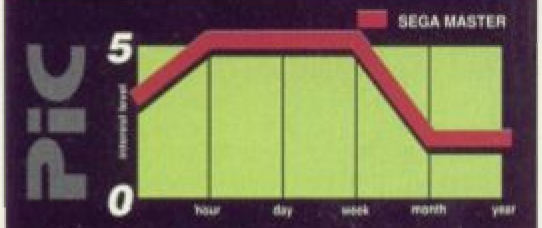


A C64 classic converted onto the Sega Master System by US GOLD

Looks like our hero is heading for the candy... a Mission Impossible?

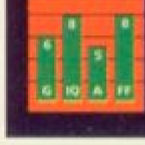
IMPOSSIBLE MISSION

Sega Master £24.99cart November



ACE RATING

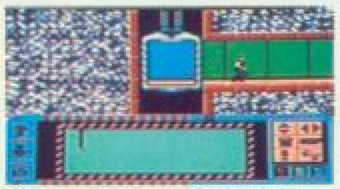
802



Impossible Mission will keep you gripped. Graphics, sound and gameplay look dated by today's standards, this is especially true when compared to the *Alex Kidd* and *Wonderboy* scrolly Sega platform games. The sampled speech has suffered a loss in quality, it sounds like a sample of a sample. Traditional computer gamers will take to *Impossible Mission*, action hungry console clubbers probably won't. Don't dismiss it, just give it a playtest before you buy.

"Another visitor. Stay awhile. Stay forever." Not the most inviting greeting you could wish from a game. *Impossible Mission*, inspired by the 1960's TV spy-shows, places you in the role of a secret agent out to stop the world-dominating plans of Professor Elvin. A secret password has been dissected into 36 pieces and scattered throughout Elvin's HQ. You must infiltrate his complex, find the password pieces, reassemble them, defeat the evil Elvin and save the world. By the way, you've only got six hours to do it.

"Destroy him my robots." Travelling via elevators, you visit a myriad of rooms – packed with deadly security robots – to find the puzzle pieces hidden away in household items like desks, sofas, bathtubs, bookcases and candy vendors. Each room is depicted as a multitude of platforms and lifts, with you leaping around – avoiding robots and searching objects. There are many types of robot, each with their own movement patterns. Most are armed with electric rays. Some stand still, others home in on you, and the top of the range models move faster than you. You'll soon learn the robo patterns – don't make any hasty moves until you've sussed what type of robot you're dealing with. Computer terminals can provide platform resets and snoozes to temporarily stun the robots in a room.

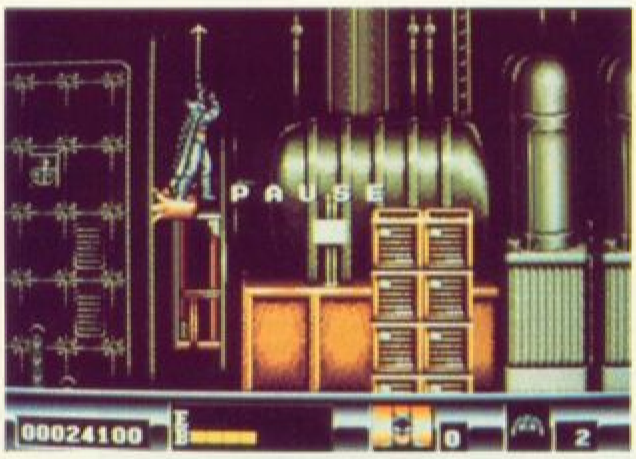


You can piece the puzzle together while travelling between rooms.

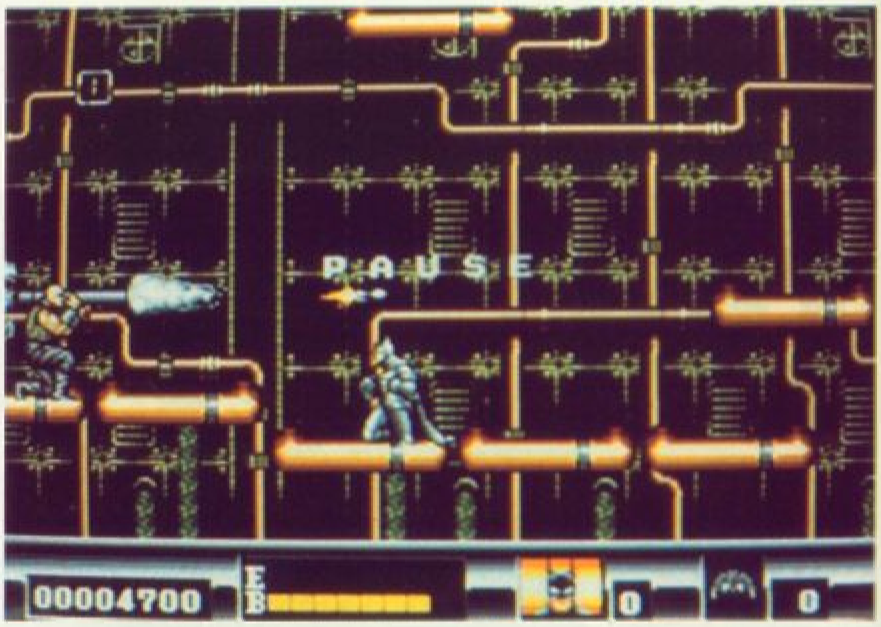
"Aaargh!" Contact with a robot or its electro-beam spells your death, as does falling off the bottom of the screen. Every time you lose a life, ten minutes are knocked off your time limit. The password portion of the game is like a jigsaw puzzle. Randomly selected each time you play, the password is nine letters long. Each letter is formed by overlaying and correctly orientating four pieces of puzzle. Elvin's room layouts are random for each game, giving *Impossible Mission* an edge over other platform titles.

Call me nostalgic. Call me virtual. I hope someone, somewhere, someday develops a virtual reality version of *Impossible Mission.* It would make a perfect VR game.

● **Rik Haynes**



Batman throws his bat hook to the ceiling in an attempt pull himself out of trouble.



One of Jack's henchmen levels a bazooka at the Caped Crusader in the chemical factory.

SUNSOFT spreads its Batwings over the Megadrive...

BATMAN

The head honchos at Sunsoft must be rubbing their hands with glee and mouthing something like 'Holy Bat Dosh" as they count the lolly rolling in from the proceeds of two smash-hit Nintendo versions of the Batgame. This Megadrive version looks like being the best quality version of the game so far, thanks to the Megadrive's superior specifications, and will doubtless keep the Batdosh winging its way into Sunsoft's coffers.

Based loosely on selected scenes from last summer's film, the game challenges the Caped Crusader to do battle with Jack and his henchmen in various locations around Gotham City.

Batty has never looked better in a computer game. From the opening sequence when he leaps in with his cape flying in the breeze he is every inch the Acrobatic Avenger.

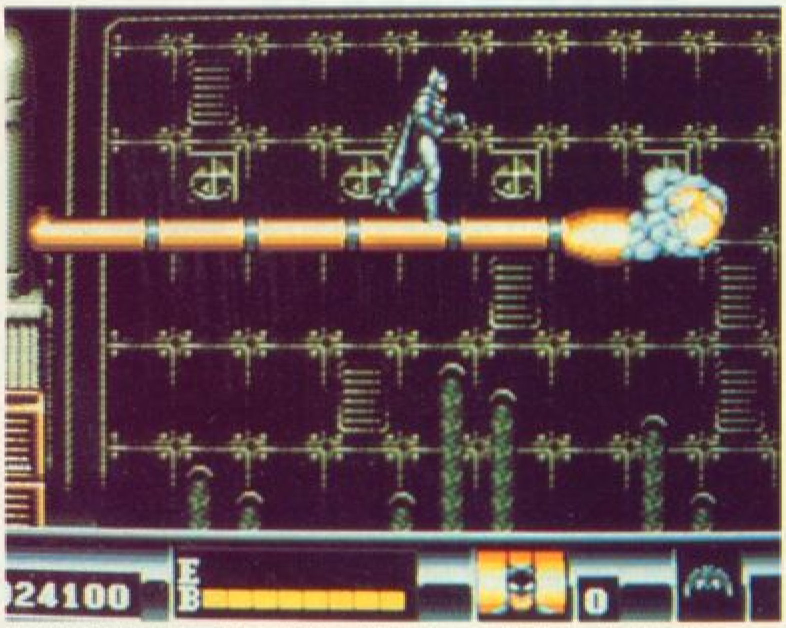
After a tough opening punch-up in the seedier ghettos of Gotham City, Batman finally tracks Jack to a chemical factory where he may succeed in dumping the arch villain into a vat of deadly acid. It looks like curtains for the super villain – but don't you believe it. Pretty soon Jack has recovered from the acid and is up to his old tricks again. This provides the excuse for a series of challenges – in the Guggenheim Museum, on The Freeway (firing missiles from the Batmobile) and finally in the skies above Gotham City.

Lots of Bat-symbol power-ups are to be grabbed as you travel the environs of Gotham City. Bat energy is the principle commodity to get your hands on since preserving as many Bat-lives as possible for the tougher end of level challenges is the only way to proceed.

Batman will test a variety of your arcade skills. The opening platform-style gameplay in the chemical factory seems tough until you master the use of the Batrope and the leaping mechanism. One early leap seems impossible until you experiment with aerial somersaults. The other areas are more simple – road racing and sky fighting.

Overall the atmosphere of the Batman film comes across very strongly both in graphics and in sound. The gameplay won't win any awards – basically an amalgam of various tried and tested, dated even, arcade challenges. That said, it is still the most comic-like interactive manipulation of Batman you are likely to get, short of becoming a multi-millionaire and building your own Bat theme park. Holy Bat dosh – now *there's* an idea!

● Eugene Lacey



That pipe is about to explode and Batty will have to spread his cloak and make a leap.

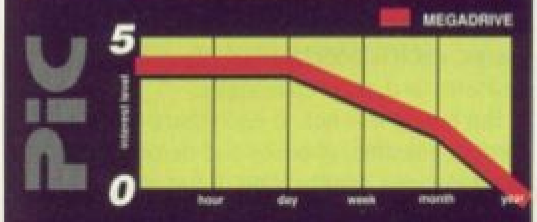
NINTENDO PRICES DOWN

Giant Japanese toy company Bandai have taken over from Serif Games as the official UK distributor of Nintendo games – a move that will have far reaching effects for all Nintendo and would-be Nintendo owners.

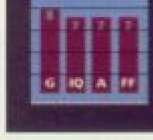
According to industry news paper Computer Trade Weekly the switch happened as Nintendo prepared to turn up the heat in the battle for the European video games market. Bandai already distribute the Nintendo in Germany and France and were not cowed by the huge sums needed to finance the bid for the UK market – believed to be upwards of twenty million pounds.

Punters will make a quick gain from this increased competition with a price cut on Nintendo hardware which should be effective by the time you read this. A special Teenage Mutant Turtles Pack will sell for just £79.99 with the Action Set Bundle falling to £99.99. Gameboy prices are also set to fall when the popular handheld is officially launched in the UK the same month. The bad news is that neither Bandai or Nintendo are announcing any changes

MEGADRIVE £39.99cart OUT NOW



ACE RATING
776



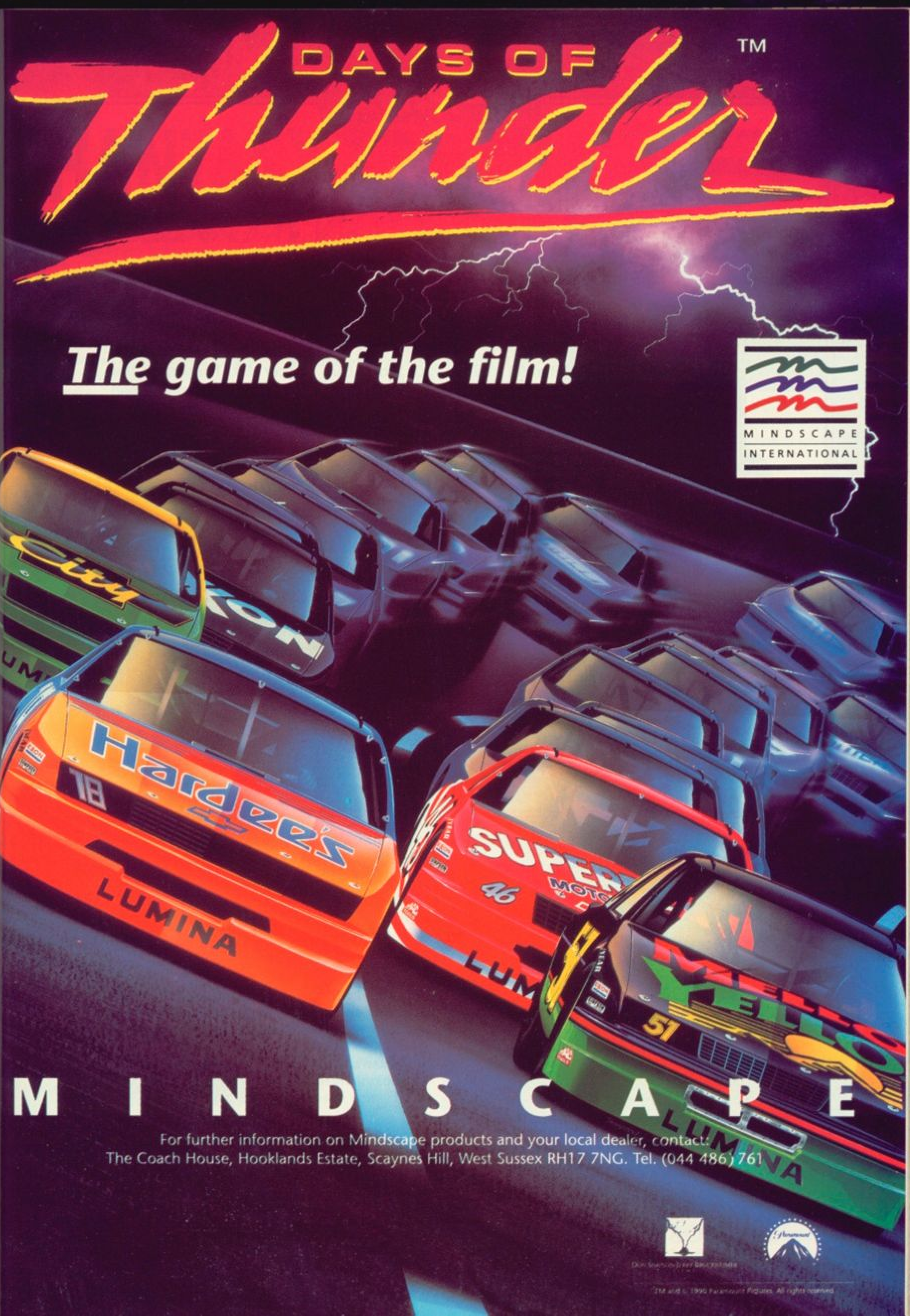
As the curve above illustrates, *Batman* scores very highly in the addiction stakes early on but then falls back rapidly in the medium term – reaching zero a bit too quickly than one would like. The arcade puzzles lack the original twists and quirks that are necessary in every new arcade game if it is to fox you for long, though this is compensated for initially by the sound and graphic attractions. Sheer Bat-appeal keeps you hooked – but not long enough for the asking price.

SEGA GIVE YOU FIVE

Whilst 'What Nintendo Will Do Next' continues to be the main topic of conversation in the video game business, Sega are steadily building their games library for the Master System – already far larger than the Nintendo equivalent.

This month see's the launch of five new cartridges – *ESWAT* (reviewed this month on the Megadrive), *Danan* – a jungle role playing game, *Columns* – a *Tetris*-type puzzle game, racing coin-op conversion *Super Monaco Grand Prix*, and platform game *Alex Kidd in Shinobi World*.

Sega expect to lauch at least two new titles a month between now and Christmas with further titles coming out from independent software houses.


DAYS OF
Thunder
TM
The game of the film!
MINDSCAPE
INTERNATIONAL
City
XON
LUMINA
Hardee's
18
LUMINA
SUPER
MOTO
46
LUM
MELLO
YELLO
51
LUMINA
MINDSCAPE
Don Simpson/Jerry Bruckheimer
Paramount

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The Coach House, Hooklands Estate, Scaynes Hill, West Sussex RH17 7NG. Tel. (044 486) 761

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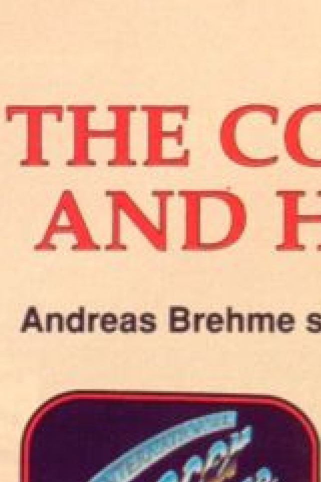
THE COMPETITION'S OVER AND HERE'S THE WINNER

Andreas Brehme scores the winner, World Cup Final, July 1990. MicroStyle introduce the winner, Autumn 1990.



Italia '90. Italy 1990. World Cup Soccer '90. Thanks for the memories. The world's greatest game, brought to your small screen for a month. Now it's time to stand out from the crowd and sprint onto the pitch - Where the real action happens.

Actual screen shot

Tackle hard for the ball, deep in your own half, and send an inch-perfect pass wide to the winger. As he takes on the full-back, you're sprinting down the middle, screaming for the return.

The ball swings across, high above the defence, as you stretch your legs to their limit. One bounce and you let fly with your boot as the goal looms before you, sending the ball fizzing towards the top corner...

International Soccer Challenge is viewed from the players' perspective at pitch level, giving you fast-flowing three-dimensional action that you control as you wish.

- Play in position as a goal-hungry striker, midfield general or unshakable defender, feeding off the passes of intelligent computer aided team-mates.

- Dictate the whole pattern of play, utilising teamwork to perfection by controlling all eleven men.

- Take charge of intricate set-piece moves from throw-ins, corners and free-kicks.

- Play in the World Cup Finals or as a member of the top sixteen Club sides from around the globe. International football as it is played for real.

- International Soccer Challenge. It will make Gascoigne weep with joy, get Marradonna excited, and have Hullit tearing his hair out.

AVAILABLE SOON FOR YOUR COMMODORE AMIGA, ATARI ST AND IBM PC COMPATIBLES FROM ALL GOOD SOFTWARE STORES.

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER CHALLENGE FROM MICROSTYLE - IT'S A WHOLE DIFFERENT BALL GAME !

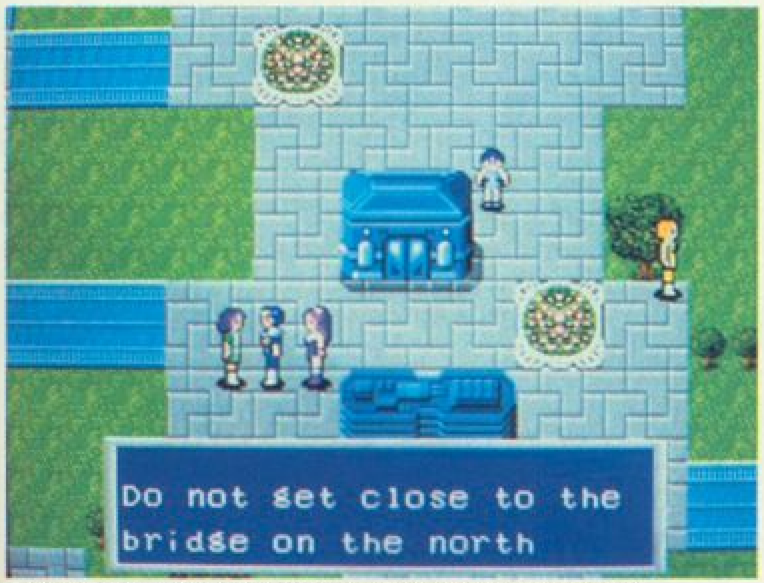
PHANTASY STAR II

P*tasy Star II* is an American import of a role playing game very much in the Japanese style. Even the facial characteristics of the heroes have that strange huge-eyed, part European and part oriental look which is peculiar to Japanese video game heroes.

The countless references in the manual to "The Genesis" refer to the American name for the Megadrive. This is no problem as it works just as well on the English machine.

The storyline is fairly familiar. In a distant corner of the universe three planets are in orbit around the beautiful star Algo. Palm is the economic and intellectual centre of the solar system, Mota the agricultural planet and Dezo is a mystery – and furthest from the Algo Star.

Role playing receives the Megadrive treatment



Do not get close to the bridge on the north

Our heroes receive some good advice in their home town in *Phantasy Star II*.

The adventure begins on the idyllic farming planet of Mota. The all-powerful Mother Brain controls everything on Mota – from the carefully regulated 'Dome Farms' to the ecology of the lakes and forests. But the Mother Brain has developed a fault. Strange beasts are terrorising the countryside. Giant Fire Ants, Locusts, and Mosquitoes are turning Mota into a nightmare land.

Into this madness comes a hero – yours truly. Tap your name in and get role playing. The Commander of Mota spells out the gravity of your mission. You must find the secret recording made in the Biosystems Laboratory, which it is hoped will throw some light on the malfunctioning of the Mother Brain.

The first thing you notice about this spot of Megadrive role playing is its speed of response. It fairly whizzes along. Information windows appear in a split second after pressing your joypad. The method of talking to players and implementing moves is the standard console system of multiple windows. It is all done with the keypad by choosing between alternatives and makes for very fast and absorbing adventuring.

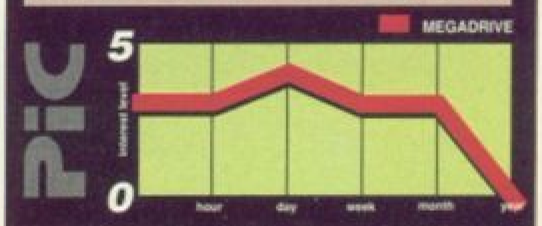
More than most role playing games, *Phantasy Star II* requires a lot of conversation with the characters you bump into on your travels. There are clues, plenty of advice, rumour and snippets of gossip to be picked up everywhere and the wise adventurer will store them away like nuggets of gold for future use.

Worthy of special praise is *Phantasy Star II*'s Hint Book. Over a hundred pages of full colour information – screen shots of every location, advice on combat, weapon and spell selection, and maps of all key areas. It makes the game a hell of a lot more enjoyable by doing most of the essential but laborious donkey work.

The sheer accessibility of *Phantasy Star II* will be enough to convince anyone who samples it that the Megadrive is just as good a role playing machine as it is an arcade box. These interplanetary adventures don't come cheap though. Expect to pay at least £55 for it on import

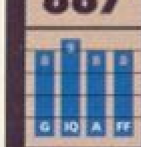
● **Eugene Lacey**

MEGADRIVE £62.99cart OUT NOW



ACE RATING

887



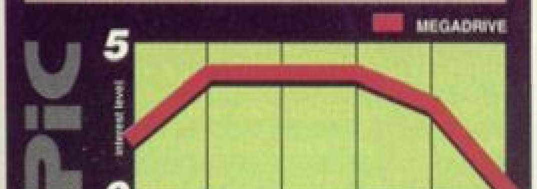
There are few Megadrive titles that can compete with *Phantasy Star II* in the lasting appeal department. It is a long term, meaty RPG that is going to tax the most battle weary of adventurers. Its save game facility makes it an ideal midnight pursuit. RPG's don't often make it onto consoles, but this game is a clear indication of things to come. When you have had your fill in the Megadrive arcade *Phantasy Star* is there to feed what grey matter you have left.

ESWAT

Megadrive imports turn up the heat

E*SWAT* stands for Enhanced Special Weapons and Tactics – a crack unit of the future police force, trained in the most advanced weapons and counter terrorism practices.

MEGADRIVE £49.99cart OUT NOW



ACE RATING

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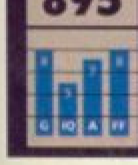
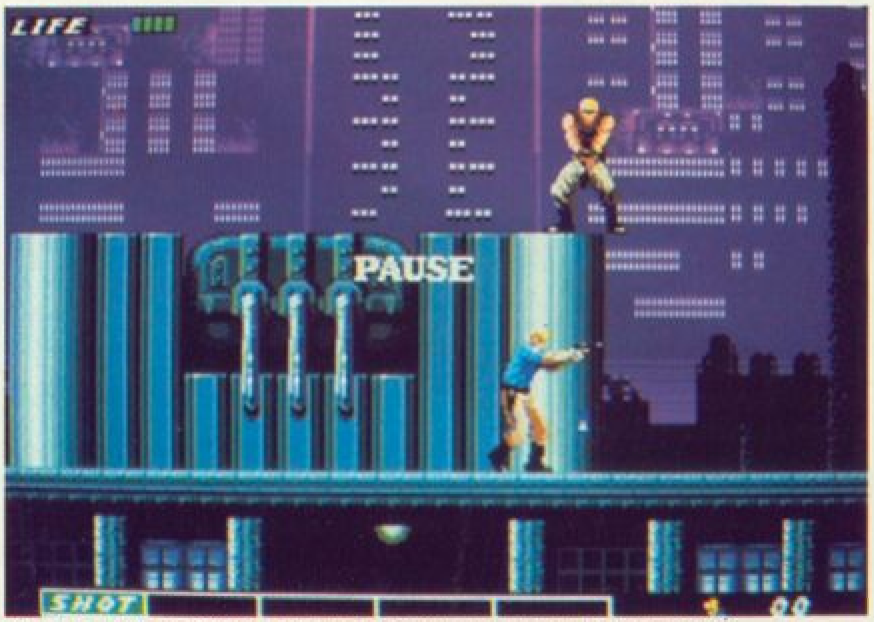


The Megadrive excels in arcade conversions such as ESWAT. They are what the machine was designed to do – and now that the programmers are getting to know the machine really well they are producing some truly superb results. Although ESWAT is based around a fairly simple game design the gameplay is sufficiently varied and challenging to keep you going until you have beaten the last of the six crime bosses. That is likely to take a long time to do.

In this conversion of the popular arcade game the ESWAT division are pitted against six crime bosses and their powerful forces. Before you can join the elite ESWAT squad you must first prove yourself as an ordinary policeman doing battle with the crime syndicate troops armed with a simple hand pistol.

If you make it through this preliminary test you will be introduced to the first of the special equipment. Superbly drawn and reminiscent of Robocop, it provides greatly enhanced fire power and takes the form of an armour suit which straps on in sections. As each item is picked up, the chart at the top of the screen shows the type of equipment that has been collected and what is left to get.



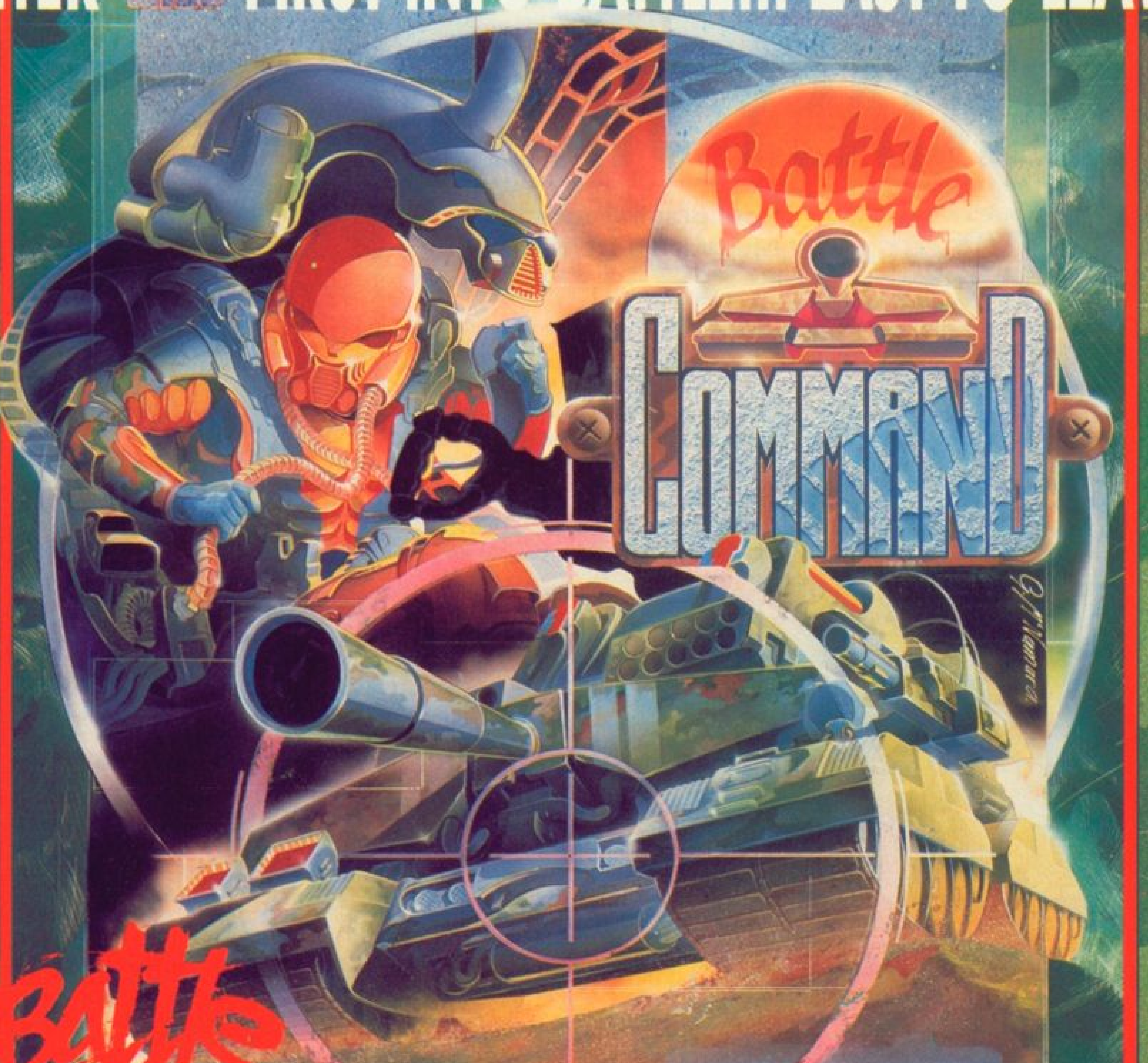
The opening level of *ESWAT* is an assault training course for would-be ESWAT members.

As well as the armour suit the ESWAT policeman must also collect enhanced weaponry power-up icons and ammunition icons. You will need every last ounce of fire power to defeat the increasingly tough crime bosses. Each boss has a unique style of attack and requires different strategies to defeat.

ESWAT is a bang up to date arcade game and its Megadrive implementation is kissing close to the coin-op original. A summer blaster of unputdownable playability.

● **Eugene Lacey**

ENTER FIRST INTO BATTLE... LAST TO LEAVE



ATARI ST
CBM AMIGA
IBM PC &
COMPATIBLES

Set in the near future, as an alternative reality, BATTLE COMMAND is an arcade/strategy game in which the player controls a single "MAULER" Assault Tank in one of 16 scenarios (missions) in the ultra war, fought between two dominant races in the NEW WORLD. The latest phase of the North/South war has been going on for over 10 years, with a stalemate eventually developing - a standoff between armies massed over a long dug-in battlefront. Such are the defensive capabilities of each side, full scale attacks are suicidal, so any offensive moves are, by necessity, small "behind the lines" actions performed by elite troops in specially designed vehicles. The Mauler is the latest such machine - capable of being lifted in and out of hostile territory by fast stealth choppers and armed with the most advanced weaponry the Northern scientists can devise.

ocean

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CDTV SWITCHES ON

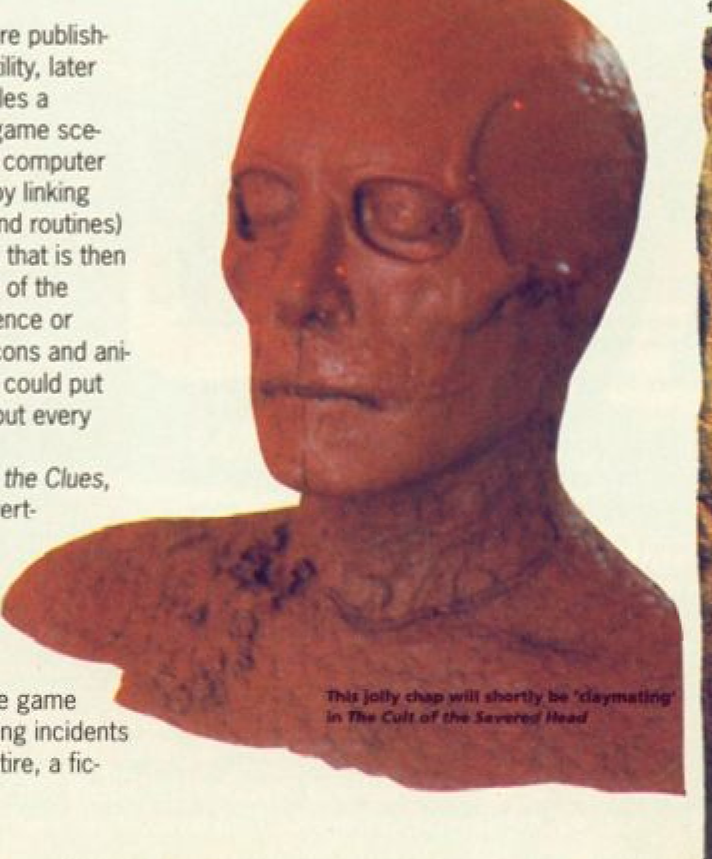
With the launch only a month or two away, ACE talks CDTV software...

THE CULT OF THE SEVERED HEAD

CRL get gruesome

CRL stole a march on most software publishers by developing their *EGADS* utility, later rechristened *DUNE*. The system enables a designer to script and develop hypergame scenarios (see ACE issue 30) for CD and computer without programming skills. It works by linking mixed media files (sound, graphics, and routines) together to build a complete scenario that is then driven by clicking on 'buttons' – areas of the screen that lead one into a new sequence or effect. Combine this with the use of icons and animation sequences and, in theory, you could put together a pretty complex beast without every having to code a single byte.

CRL's first *DUNE* release, *Herewith the Clues*, already covered in ACE, is being converted for CDTV and is broadly similar to the original Amiga version but with enhanced graphics. *The Cult of the Severed Head*, however, is their first dedicated CDTV *DUNE* product.


This jolly chap will shortly be 'claymating' in *The Cult of the Severed Head*

A frame from the CDTV version of *Herewith the Clues* – that cuppa looks a lot better than the original Amiga version.

Developed by Nicholas Gardner, the game is the first in a proposed series detailing incidents from the casebook of Nathaniel Tallantire, a fictionalised Reverend who is the senior exorcist in the Church of England. The story starts in 54BC when one Galatius sought to save retreating Druids from the Roman army by conjuring an evil spiritual manifestation generated by human sacrifice. The Druids aren't overwhelmed by gratitude when he succeeds in saving them and imprison the demon before killing Galatius. As magical chaps will do, however, he resurrects and teaches his tormentors a few lessons before disappearing into history.

By now the mention of severed heads and human sacrifice will have alerted the knowledge-

JAPAN WORLD

The low cost of the CDTV compared to other multimedia devices has led to it being used for a unique development in Derbyshire.

Toyota recently decided to build a £700 million car assembly plant in the county, and the local council wanted to educate the locals in matters Japanese. What better way to do it than produce a multimedia educational package...

Global Learning Systems are producing the package, called *Japan World*, and Central Television will be be providing facilities and technology to help produce the software. The package will then be supplied to local institutions complete with a CDTV to run it on – the hardware will be sponsored by Commodore.

***Japan World* demonstrates that CDTV will indeed open up entirely new areas of application. Stand by for fireworks when the entertainment industry really get their teeth into it...**

Aha! A clue! One of the objects that appears (in digitised form) in *The Cult of the Severed Head*

able to the fact that CRL are up to their old tricks. Having braved industry scorn with their earlier horror releases (*Jack the Ripper*, *Dracula*, and others), the company are now drooling at the mouth at the thought of the enhanced possibilities of CDTV. At last: 550 megabytes of blood, gore, and spine tingling suspense!

By the time you get hold of the game, the scenario will have shifted to the 1920's, where the Reverend Tallantire is summoned to Wales to investigate some 'strange disturbances'. The game is being put together using a combination of claymation, traditional computer animation, manuscripts, and diagrams. Ess-entially an adventure scenario, it will include clues, riddles, and detective work for the player who must unravel the secret behind the incidents.

The game will make full use of the CDTV's IR controller, boasts 4096 HAM graphic screens, text vocalisation if required, hypertext descriptions (i.e. you can click on passages for more details or developments), and stop frame claymation. In addition, up to 250 photographics of the actual district where the action takes place will be included in the game.

It all sounds, well, rather horrible. We can't wait for the review copy!

> *"We are breaking through old barriers with these products. We are taking computer entertainment into new, exciting territories with new ideas, new technology, and a new approach."*
>
> **CRL's Michael Hodges in bullish mood**

DR FEELGOOD

DIGITA help you deliver...

You've just come back from work to find your girlfriend giving birth in the kitchen. Do you call a doctor? No, like the man you are you boot up *Dr Feelgood* on your CDTV, invoke the Emergency Facility, and follow the simple on-screen instructions. Ooopss...sextuplets...

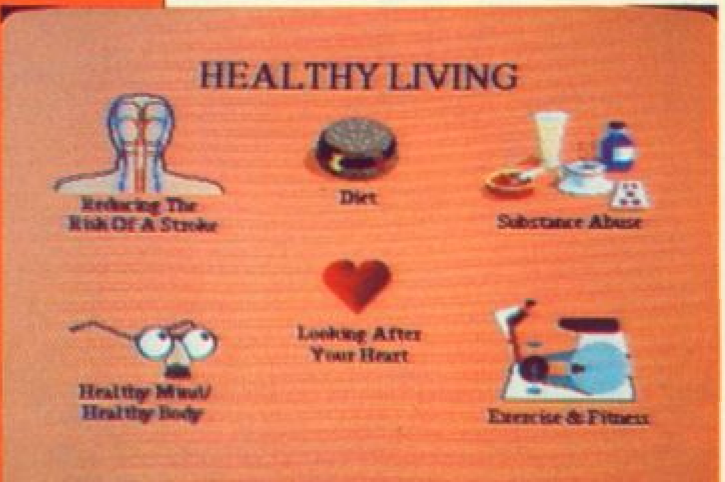
Seriously, however – OK, sextuplets are VERY serious – seriously, however, *Dr Feelgood* is an excellent example of CDTV development. It aims to make maximum use of the audio and visual capability of the machine while at the same time offering improved user control in an application that must surely have universal appeal.

Not strictly entertainment, we agree – although a family doctor program with sound effects would seem to have enormous entertainment possibilities – but *Dr Feelgood* gets an ACE mention because it shows how a utility application using new technology can overlap with the leisure market because of its interactive nature.

For example, apart from delivering kids, checking up on your teeth, and carrying out emergency first aid, *Dr Feelgood* also contains interactive procedures to give you advice on diet and fitness, foreign travel, and exercise. For the hypochondriac it's an essential purchase because it uses a keyword system to provide a dictionary of symptoms and conditions.

On a more serious note, the 'Emergency Facility' mentioned above enables you to jump straight into a specific area of the program if circumstances demand immediate action. There are five main areas within the system: personal health, first aid, travelling abroad, obstetrics/infant growth, and a simple diary.

Developed over 2.5 man years, Digital claim that 'enormous research and design has gone into a specific user interface so that the program can be effectively controlled using the hand-held CDTV remote control.' Our only reservation so far is that it doesn't seem to provide a full-scale surgical instruction module. Ah well, guess we'll have to continue to make do with *Life and Death*. More clinical details next month...



Digita's user interface mixes text, graphics, animation, narration, music, and – gulp! – sound effects

Commodore
Dr Feelgood
By
DIGITA TECHNOLOGY

STAND AND DELIVER!

Here's a quick run-down of the modules within *Dr Feelgood*...

PERSONAL HEALTH

- **Healthy living – diet, exercise, fitness, substance abuse (including alcohol and smoking), looking after your heart, psychology**
- **Self examination – regular self-checkup procedures**
- **Adult health – personal/sexual problems**
- **Senior citizens – continued health**
- **Health test – general health test**
- **Dental Health – explanation and preventative medicine**
- **Alternative medicine – types and descriptions**

FIRST AID

Basic principles, medical emergencies, major techniques, general skills

TRAVELLING ABROAD

Features 160 countries around the world, listing information about vaccinations, medications, mandatory medical requirements, climate (temperature, rainfall, humidity, sunshine – full year), suitable clothing, local hazards, emergency procedures. Additional 'before you go' advice

DIARY

Simple diary to note medical appointments, vaccination recalls, child vaccinations etc

EMERGENCY

Immediate facility to jump into any specific part of the system

WHAT PRICE FMV?

For most people, the real attraction of CD technology is the potential for full motion video – movies, effectively, on compact disk. Current research has shown, however, that FMV may not be as important as previously thought.

Virgin, who have extensively researched FMV previously during their involvement with the North Polar Expedition interactive video disk, have already discovered that lengthy periods of animation induce a 'couch potato' effect, whereby the user relaxes into a quiescent state, watching the 'movie' and losing interest in the interaction.

This effect has been confirmed by other developers, who are beginning to realise that the active sense of involvement users feel from an interactive scenario is different to the more passive involvement felt while watching video sequences. Virgin found that useful lengths of animation within interactive scenarios could be as little 1 to 2 seconds long, allowing sequences to be animated from RAM without the need for drawing frames from the CD.

This is just as well, because FMV may be longer in arriving than we thought. Although Philips and Sony are claiming that CD-I, due for launch next year, will be delivered with FMV capability and Commodore say they will be producing an FMV adapter for CDTV, the reality appears to be slightly different.

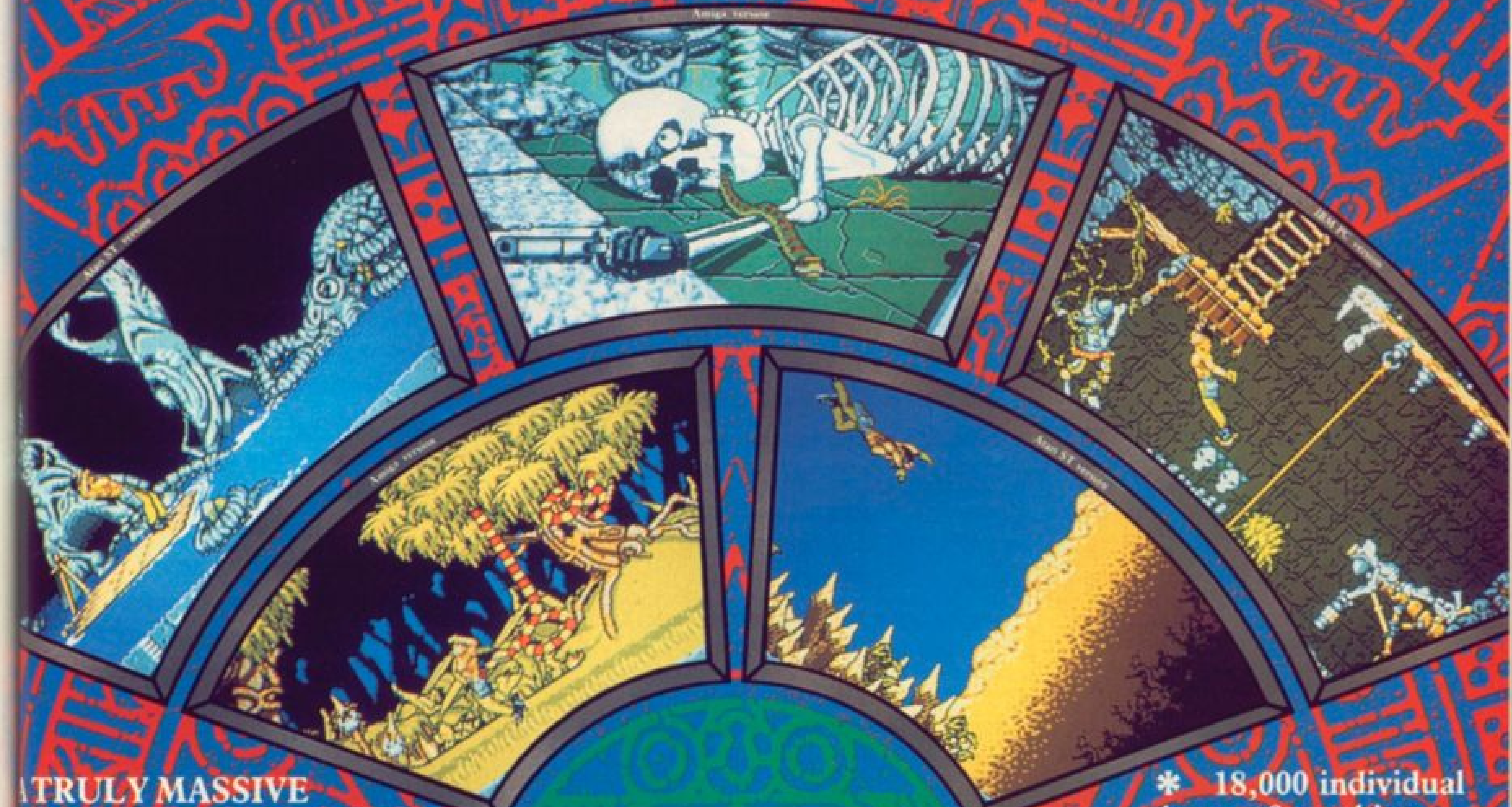
The difficulty has arisen for two reasons. The core of the problem is simply that most video stills generate up to 500K and need to be animated at between 18 and 30 frames a second – whereas the CD can only transfer 150K in that period. At a worst case scenario (500K stills running at the NTSC standard of 30 frames a second) that means that each screen will have to drop from around half a megabyte to just 5K!

There are two possible solutions to this. The first is a hardware solution: design a decompression/compression chipset that will do the job for you and can be built into all the machines. Unfortunately, this requires an exact standard to be defined otherwise different machines will end up demanding incompatible file formats. The Motion Picture Expert Group (MPEG) is currently getting together to define a Digital Video Standard, but the specs aren't likely to be published until later in 1991 and then it will take a couple of years for chipsets to be (a) designed and (b) produced cheaply enough to be useful. A current hardware solution, DVI from Intel, costs $2000 for the chipset alone – you still need your CD system to go with it.

The second possible solution is to do the whole thing in software. Previously this was reckoned to be impossible, but there have been enormous advances in recent months in compression technology and it is conceivable that software might ultimately provide the answer.

With so many people chasing the solution to FMV along different paths, expect to wait at least five years before FMV CD systems become widely available.

A THOUSAND WAYS TO DIE...



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- 600K of music & sound effects.
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- Over 80 screens of non-stop action, interwoven with devious puzzles.

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For 400 years no-one has dared to take up the Quetzalcotl's 'Gold of the Aztecs'. Bret Conrad's special forces training and combat duty have made danger a way of life. This time the odds are really stacked against him – and you, in one of the biggest, most fascinating games ever devised!

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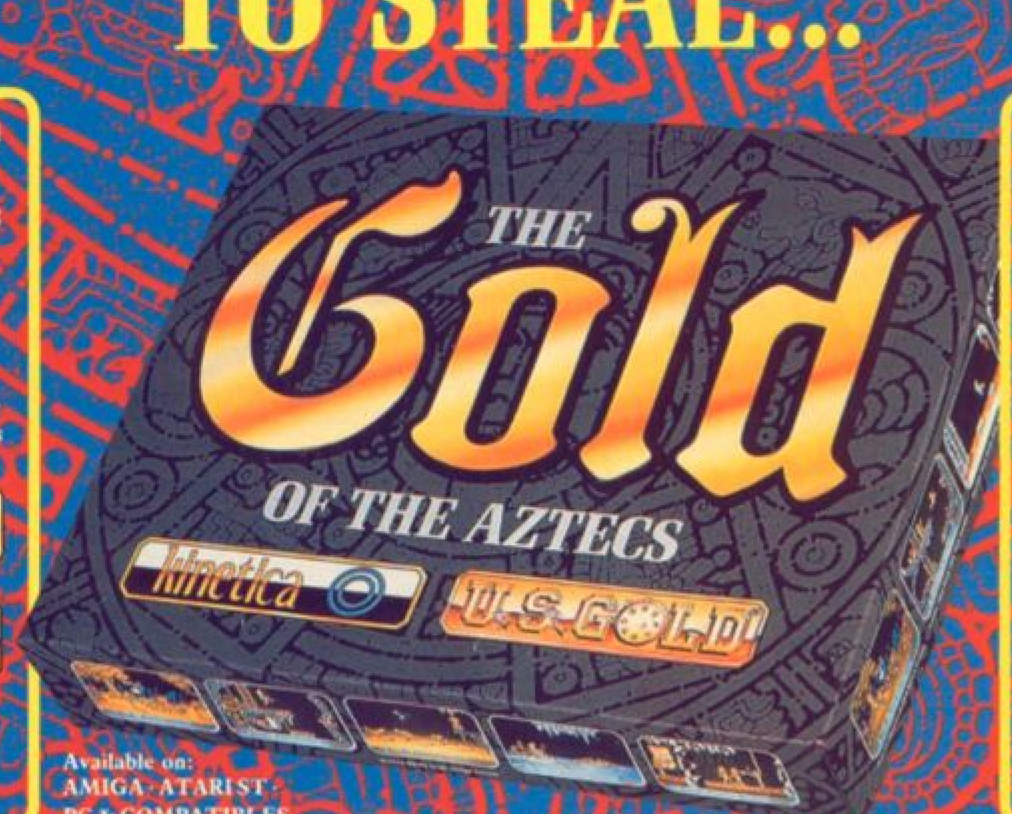

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We think this game is one of the toughest action adventures ever devised. That's why we're giving away the trip of a lifetime to visit the Land of the Aztecs in Mexico – Summer 1991. To win you have to beat all-comers in

THE GREAT AZTEC GOLD RUN!

(See inside box for details.)

Screen shots are only intended to be illustrative of the game play and not the screen graphics which vary considerably between different formats in quality and appearance and are subject to the computers specifications.

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Cadaver™

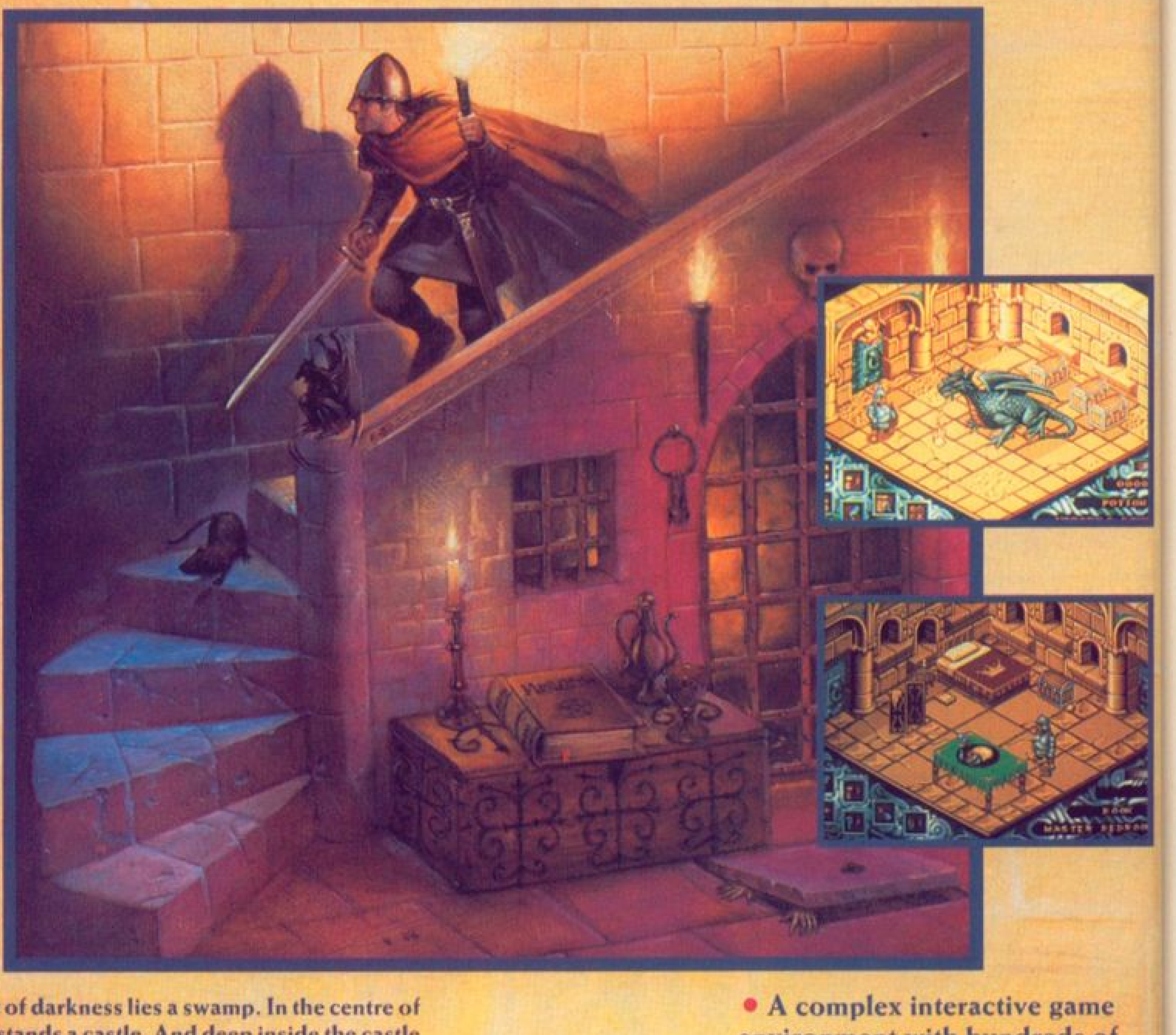

iMAGE WORKS

Deep in the heart of darkness lies a swamp. In the centre of the swamp there stands a castle. And deep inside the castle the Necromancer waits.
His history is steeped in blood: A feud between the kingdom's heirs, a battle won by magic and a massacre that stained the battlements red with blood. In the aftermath many adventurers tried to unravel the enigma. None returned alive.
But fate has nurtured a hero. No valiant knight or swarthy soldier but a liar, a mercenary and a thief. Karadoc the dwarf is destined to go where men have failed, to come face to face with the Necromancer and probe the darkest mystery known to man. His motive? Not honour or love or a personal feud; not a crusade against evil or a deep hatred of Necromancy; but treasure! and Castle Wulf is bursting at the seams with it...
Cadaver is the interactive fantasy adventure you've been waiting for. Stumble through a labyrinth of age-old passageways, explore the mystic contents of Wulf's secret rooms, battle to the death with hideous monsters, grapple with supernatural traps and puzzle over the enigmatic spells of Necromancy.

- A complex interactive game environment with hundreds of different rooms and locations.
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The BITMAP BROTHERS

Screen Shots from Atari ST version

© 1990 Mirrorsoft Ltd © 1990 The Bitmap Brothers

updates

ACE sees how some recent hits have fared as new 8 and 16 bit versions

SPECTRUM

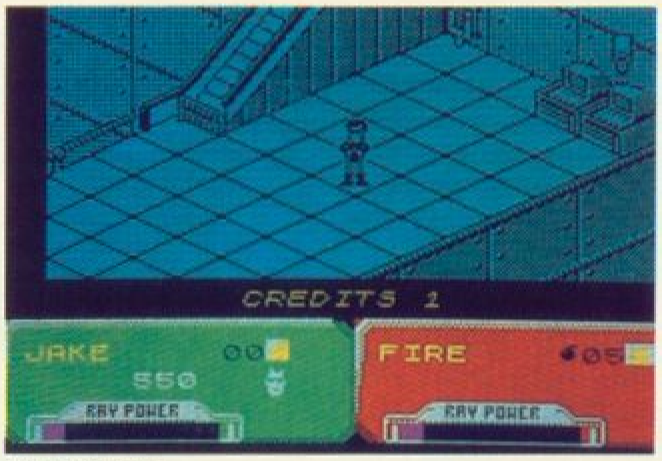
ESCAPE FROM THE PLANET OF ROBOT MONSTERS

Domark/Tengen £9.99 £12.99; Atari ST version reviewed Issue 32; ACE rating 880

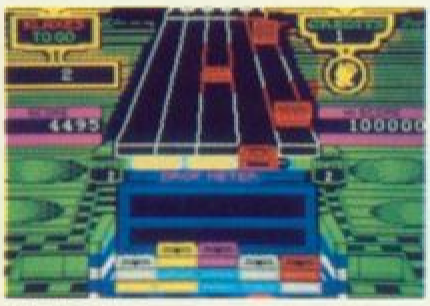
EFPRM has finally arrived for the Spectrum, having already being reviewed for all the other major formats. Escaping from the robot-infested planet , you have several tasks to perform along the way, these forming several subplots to the game. These sub-plots include freeing human prisoners (who are slaving away in the factories that you travel through), fighting the robots, and on every third level using your collected bombs to kill an evil reptilian.

Something that is lacking in these 8-bit versions is the inclusion of the space mobile maze, which gives a good variety to the 16-bit versions of the game. The graphics are in a tasteful shade of pink and black and the sound is reasonable. The game plays in a similar style to the other versions and almost manages to retain the pace and atmosphere, but the result is definitely a less addictive experience.

SPECTRUM RATING: 700



Escape / Spectrum



Klax / Spectrum

KLAX

Domark; £9.99; £12.99; ST Version Reviewed Issue 32; ACE rating 895

Practically everybody in the world must have played *Tetris*, and now a new game in the same genre has arrived for the Spectrum. In this game you have to arrange the blocks that you catch on your `paddle' and then build them up in groups of three of the same colour. These groups of three blocks (Klaxes) can be horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

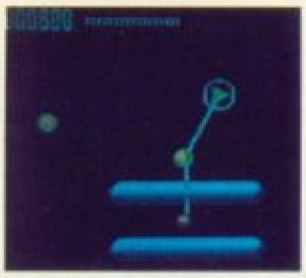
When you are asked to collect 3 horizontal Klaxes in the third round you will find this a very difficult challenge. But once you pass this level you will be able to cope with most of the other challenges you are faced with in the game. The colours of the Klaxes can however become almost indistinguishable when the blocks are coming at you at speed, which is infuriating at times. As in *Tetris*, simplicity rules OK.

SPECTRUM RATING: 820

AMSTRAD

E-MOTION

U.S. Gold; 14.99 10.99 ; Amiga Version Reviewed Issue 32; ACE Rating 890



E-Motion / Amstrad

An original product involving balls and bars. This game has you in control of a sphere with a triangle in the middle of it which you use to manoeuvre about the screen, colliding with other balls. The objective is to make other balls of the same colours crash into each other. They then disappear. To complicate things bars are placed on the screen to send the on-screen balls flying across the screen when they hit each other. The bars can also trap balls of different colours. When two balls of different colours collide then a small ball of another colour is produced. If you collect this quick enough then it will act as an energy pod, colliding with which will boost your energy levels. Leave it too long, however, and the new ball will become a pulsating sphere which will explode – the same applies to all of the other balls if not cancelled out by one of the same colour. The only difference with the Amstrad version is that it has no coloured background and is not ray-traced. Yet another addictive game based on a simple idea and destined to be a hit.

AMSTRAD RATING: 837

COMMODORE 64

PIPE MANIA

Entertainment; £9.95cs £14.95dk; Amiga Version Reviewed Issue 31; ACE Rating 910

In this popular puzzler, you are a plumber and must place lengths of different shaped piping so the 'Flooz' keeps flowing for as long as possible. To complicate matters objects are scattered around the screen to block off your ideal route. Also the piping pieces are given to you in a set order, so you need to be quick thinking to optimise the use of each one. To get over the obvious problems caused by this you can place a piece of piping over another piece. This is called `Bombing', but it takes longer than placing a piece on an empty space and time is of the essence because the Flooz is flowing. Dumping pieces by placing them anywhere on the screen doesn't help either, because at the end any extra pieces are counted up and points are deducted from your score. As you get further into the game you will find it very challenging, but as you progress through levels you will be given a password so that you don't have to go all the way back to the beginning each time you lose at a high level. Not a difficult game to convert downwards, and a highly addictive scenario.

C64 RATING 910

FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR

Gremlin; £9.99cs £14.99dk; Atari ST Version Reviewed Issue 31; ACE Rating 670

The World Cup has passed and still football games are hitting the shelf. This game has you playing in a host of national and international matches. In this version, however, the actual games take place in an area only slightly larger than the goal area – very restricting at times, so the whole games effectively revolve around shooting at goal.

To improve your score you can buy goalcards if you follow a set plan. Also you can play trivia games to increase your bank balance. Then at the end of the season if you've scored the most goals you become the Footballer Of The Year.

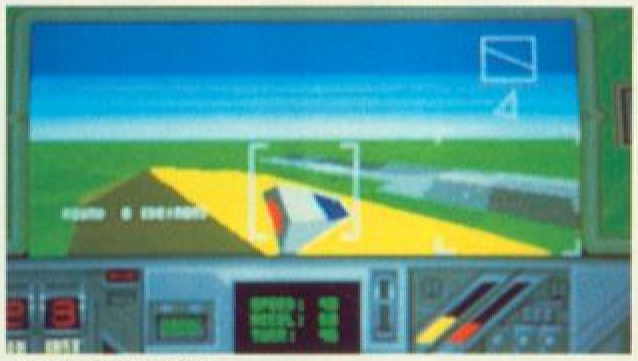
The graphics are scarcely worth a mention with stick men for footballers. The sound hardly exists during the game and what there is is poor. Despite all this, the game is actually quite enjoyable at first, but after a few goes you get tired of the small playing area and look for something else.

C64 RATING 580

ATARI ST

THUNDERSTRIKE

Millennium; £24.99; PC Version Reviewed Issue 35; ACE Rating 885; ACE Graphics Award


Thunderstrike / Atari ST

The first thing that strikes you about this futuristic fight and flight game is its speed. Compared to a flight sim such as F19 or F16 where the scenery scrolls at a fairly reasonable pace, in *Thunderstrike* your ship, with added turbo boosters, positively scorches across the screen. Even better are the amazing solid 3D graphics and the ship's responsive handling, only let down by the sound department.

You are appearing for a TV show where you have to defend your home base from a whole host of enemy robotic craft. Certain ships leave behind energy pods, turbo boosters and shield enhancers when destroyed, which you can collect by simply flying over them. As it's a TV show the better you perform and the more dramatic your performance is determines marks what type of ship you get in the next round.

One of the main pluses of the game is that the game is very easy to play and get into (unlike many flight sims) and this certainly helps the addiction level. A slick, sophisticated shoot-em-up.

ST RATING 885

INFESTATION

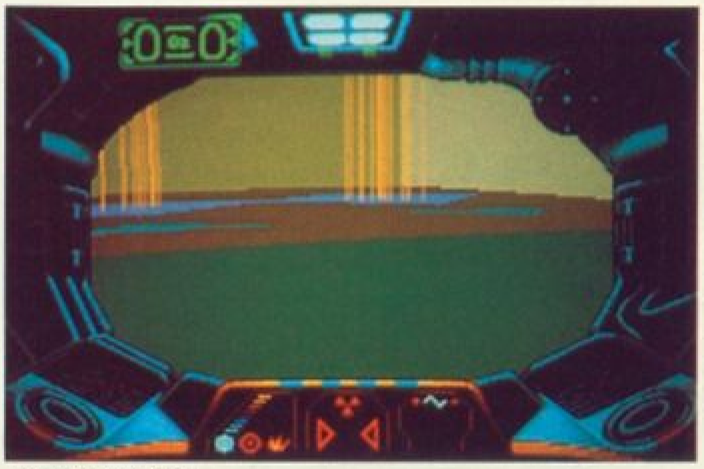
Psygnosis; £24.99; Amiga Version Reviewed Issue 32; ACE Rating 720

You have been placed on the planet Xelos and MUST rid the space station Alpha 2 of its alien invaders. To do this you have to close in each of the alien eggs and poison them with your cyanide gas. Also you have to destroy the alien droids and the mother alien.

To achieve this task you have to manoeuvre around the planet and the space station either by foot or by the MMU (Manned Manoeuvre Unit). There is a wide range of objects to be found and identified – for example, you have to identify lifts and computers and other items otherwise you will *get nowhere in the game. Once you have worked out the* basics, you'll find that this is as much a game of exploration as it is of shooting aliens and destroying eggs.

There are a large number of floors and rooms to be explored so Infestation will be kept off your shelf for quite a reasonable amount of time. The graphics are adequate but without pushing the computer's capabilities. Tough at first but the map and the playability soon grow on you.

ST Rating: 720


Infestation / Atari ST

AMIGA

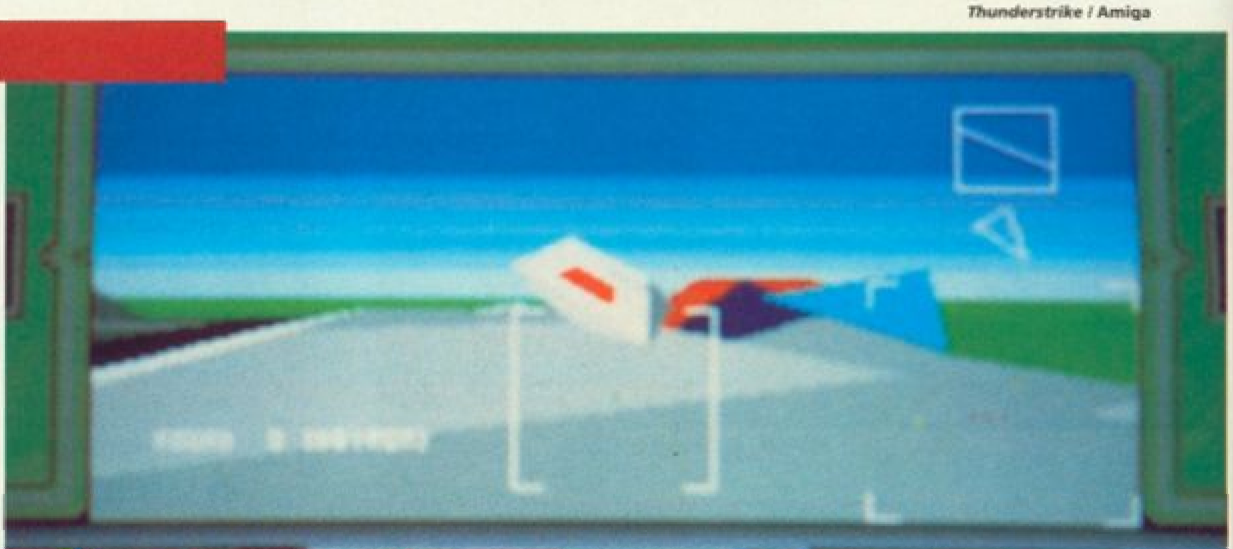
THUNDERSTRIKE

Millenium; £24.99; PC Version Reviewed Issue 35; ACE rating 885, ACE Graphics Award

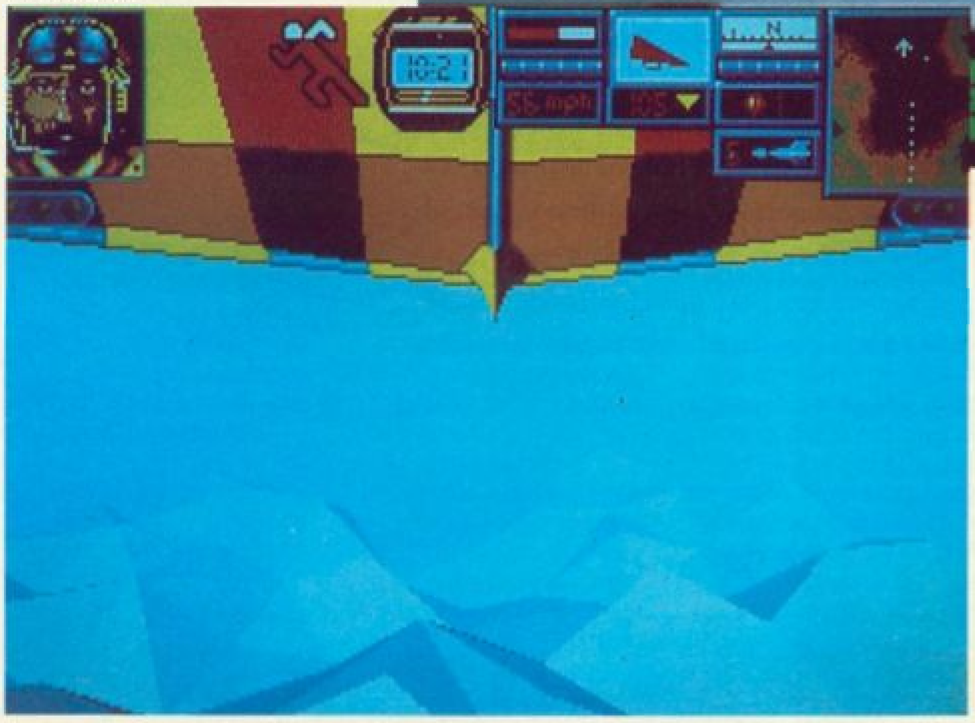
See the ST review for game details. There are few differences between the two versions, but the Amiga does have better sound (as expected!). Definitely one to consider.

AMIGA RATING 885

Thunderstrike / Amiga



Midwinter / PC



PC

MIDWINTER

Rainbird; £34.99; Atari ST Version Reviewed Issue 32; ACE Rating 948

The PC version of this solid vector 3D exploration, strategy, and action game is virtually indistinguishable from the other 16-bit versions and plays every bit as well. You must recruit allies to help you fight off an invasion that threatens your livelihood on a frozen continent during a future ice age. The challenge is enormous and involves mastering skiing, using snow buggies, sniping at the opposition, and balancing resources and personnel. A big game that deserves consideration by every PC owner.

PC RATING 948

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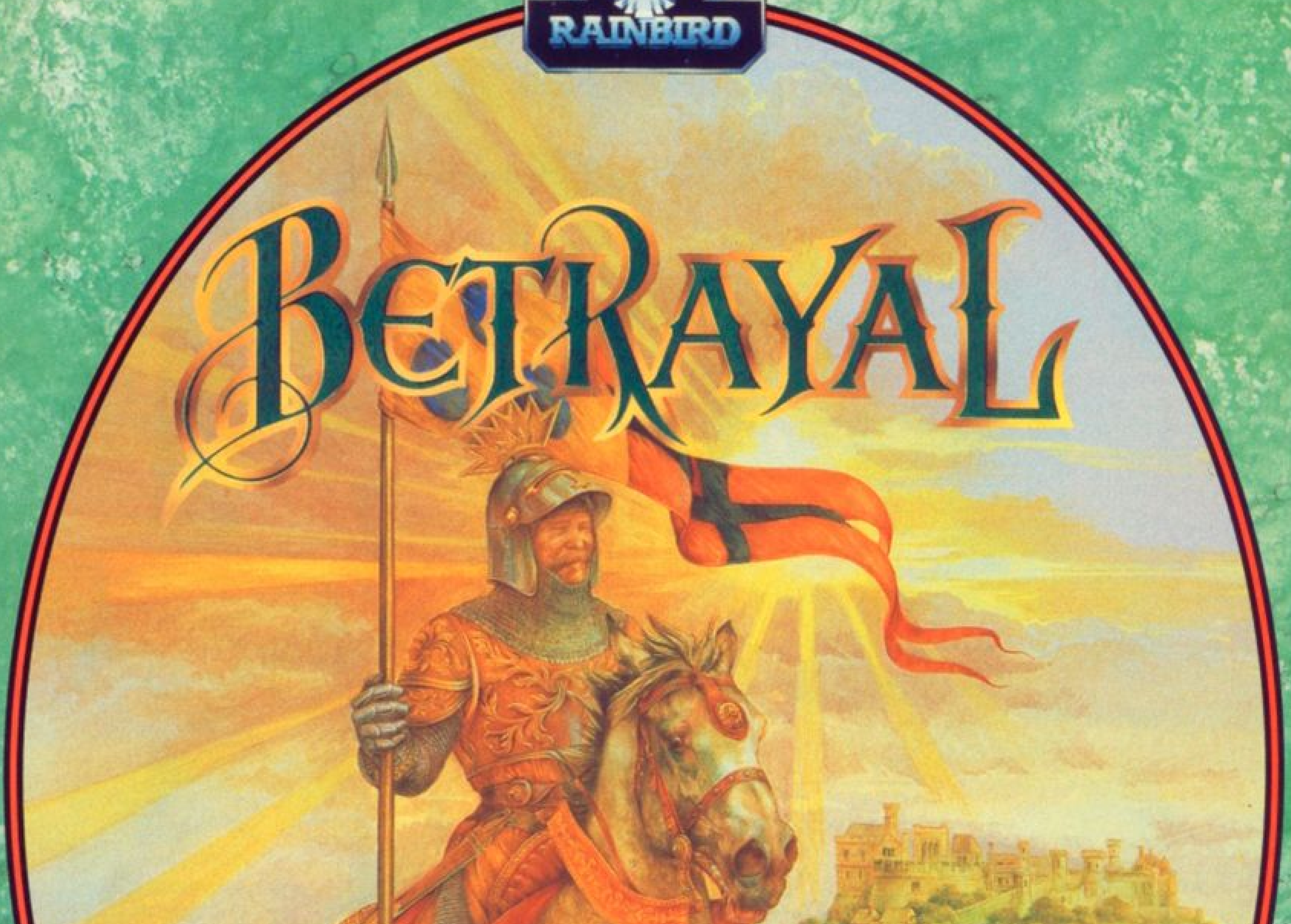
RAINBIRD



A WEB OF INTRICATE POSSIBILITIES - BUT FAIR PLAY ISN'T ONE OF THEM

MASTERS OF STRATEGY

A WEB OF INTRICATE POSSIBILITIES - BUT FAIR PLAY ISN'T ONE OF THEM

BETRAYAL

The West Marches is a corrupt land ruled by immoral leaders. You are one of four Knights with a lust for power. And in the pursuit of power, the end justifies the means.

The bloodiest battles yield the greatest spoils. Strategically extend your domain, reduce your rivals' resources, and tighten your stranglehold on the peasants of the land.

Towns 8
Evidence
none

The towns provide your power base. Manage them successfully, and harvest the wealth needed to buy, bribe and fight for ultimate power.

Betrayal involves a long, hard, ruthless struggle, starting with the economic management of your towns and cultivation of your lands, culminating in the honing of your military strategy and execution of political subterfuge.

Develop a mastery of political subterfuge, gaining places for your Courtiers at the palaces of the King and Bishop, ready for the coup which will make you the master of Betrayal.

BETRAYAL
A HELL OF A GOD GAME

A new barrel of fine Welsh ale had just been broached. The royal palace's smoky dining hall resounded to cheery voices. To one side of the top table a harpist and a minstrel were struggling to be heard above the commotion caused by two dogs snarling over a bone in a corner.

Eating slowly, I leant forward to catch the breathless whisper of a rival knight.

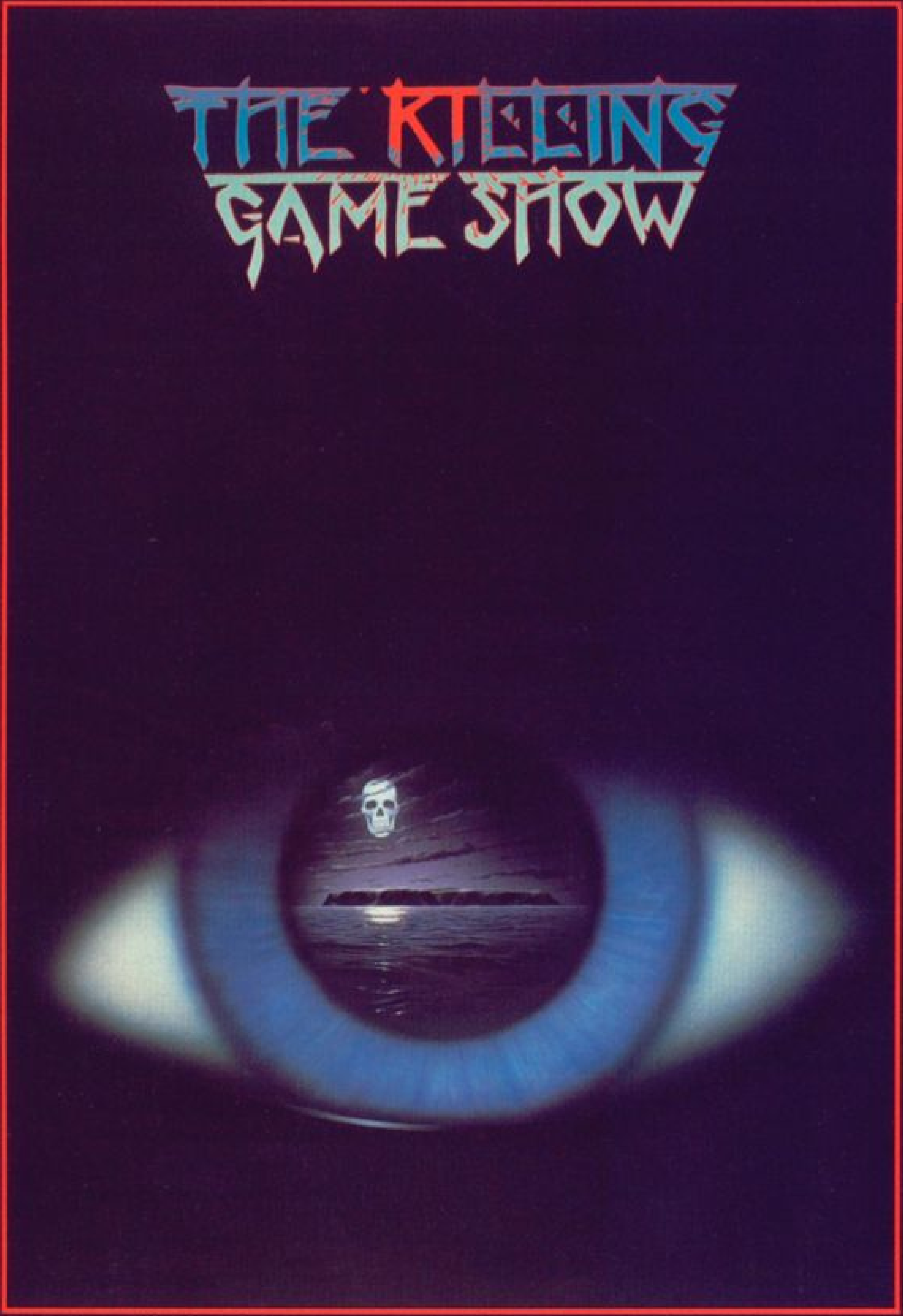
'They came in at a run, baying like wolves. Four wild-eyed barbarians ready to cut, gouge, pulverise and kill anything that moved.'

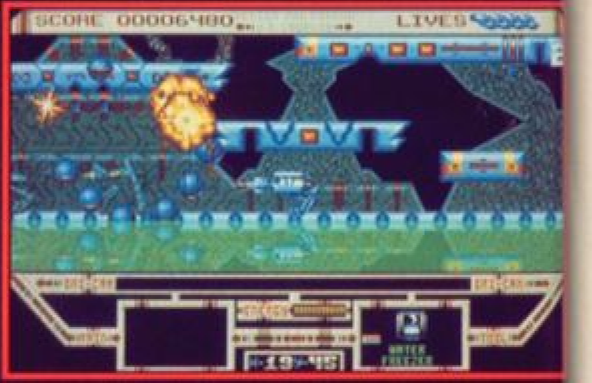
That news was indeed music to my ears. My forces' attack on his wealthiest town had met with success. Financially weakened, militarily broken, and politically bankrupt, he could no longer hold influence at Court.

So long as no evidence of my wrong doing remained. So long as the Gods blessed the crops of my harvest. So long as the rumours of the capture of my brother were true. The throne was mine.

I've cheated, lied, spied and slaughtered. The fruits of Betrayal are mine.

RAINBIRD


THE KILLING
GAME SHOW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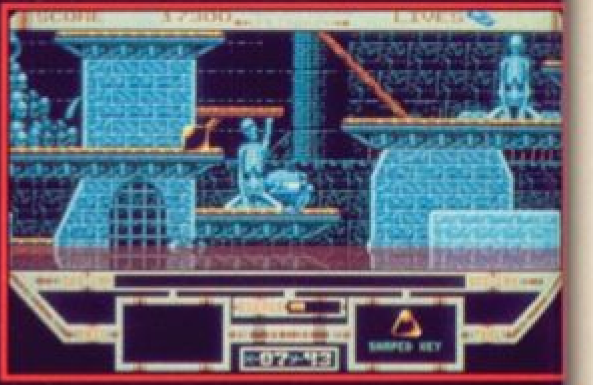
LIVES
WATER FREEZER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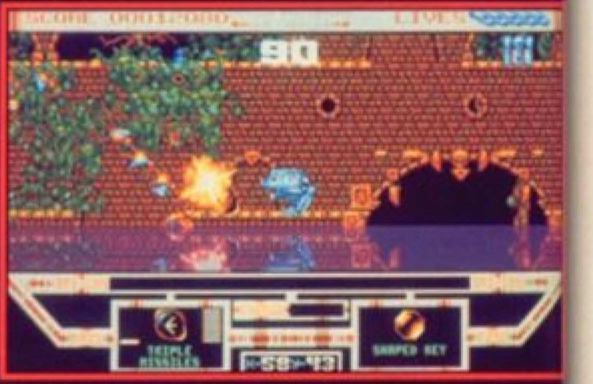
LIVES
SHAPED KEY


SCORE
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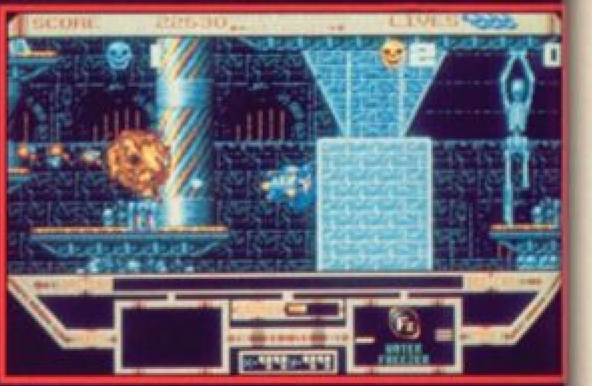
TRIPLE MISSILES
SHAPED KEY


SCORE
LIVES
WATER FREEZER

THE KILLING GAME SHOW . . .

. . . WILL HAVE YOU CLIMBING THE WALLS – IT'S THE ONLY WAY OUT!

Suited in limited-protection armour you're the unwilling contestant on THE KILLING GAME SHOW. In front of a TV audience of millions you must battle your way to the top of 16 Pits of Death infested with Hostile Artificial Life Forms specially created by THE KILLING GAME SHOW's manic scientists to give you a hard time.
But . . . don't forget the rising fluid or it's "next contestant time".
You must give the viewers their value for money — collect the awesome weapons and tools — if you can!

First prize is your life — Don't waste it!

Screen Shots from the Amiga version

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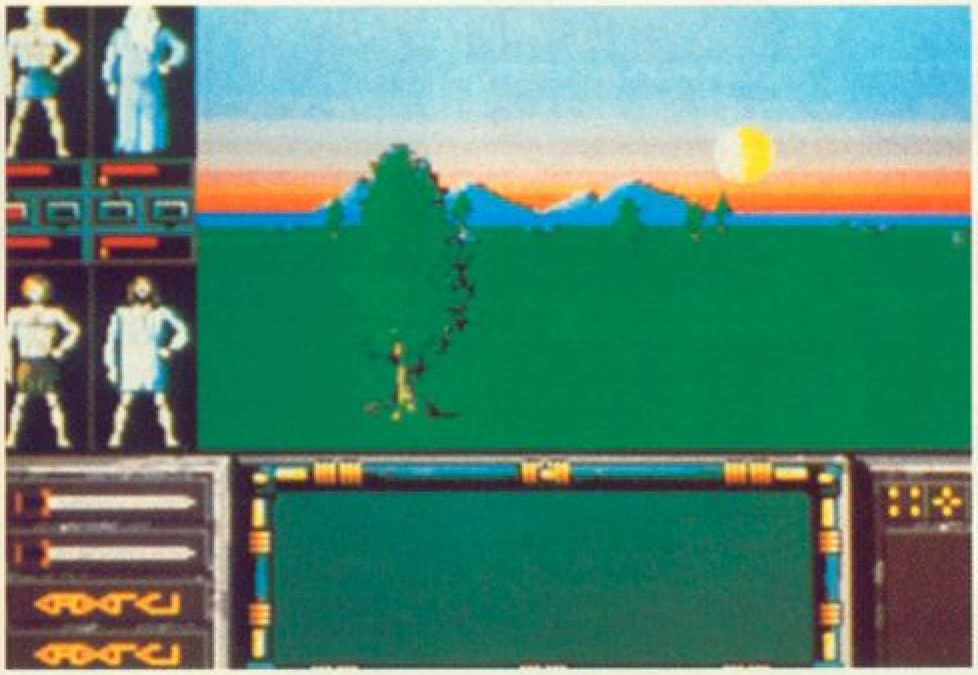


DRAKKHEN

THE COMPLETE GUIDE PART TWO

A quick recap. In August's exciting episode Adam Morley took us through the initial stages of *Drakkhen* but, alas, he took us into the Temperate Zone where a dragon landed on his head. Ouch...

The saga continues...

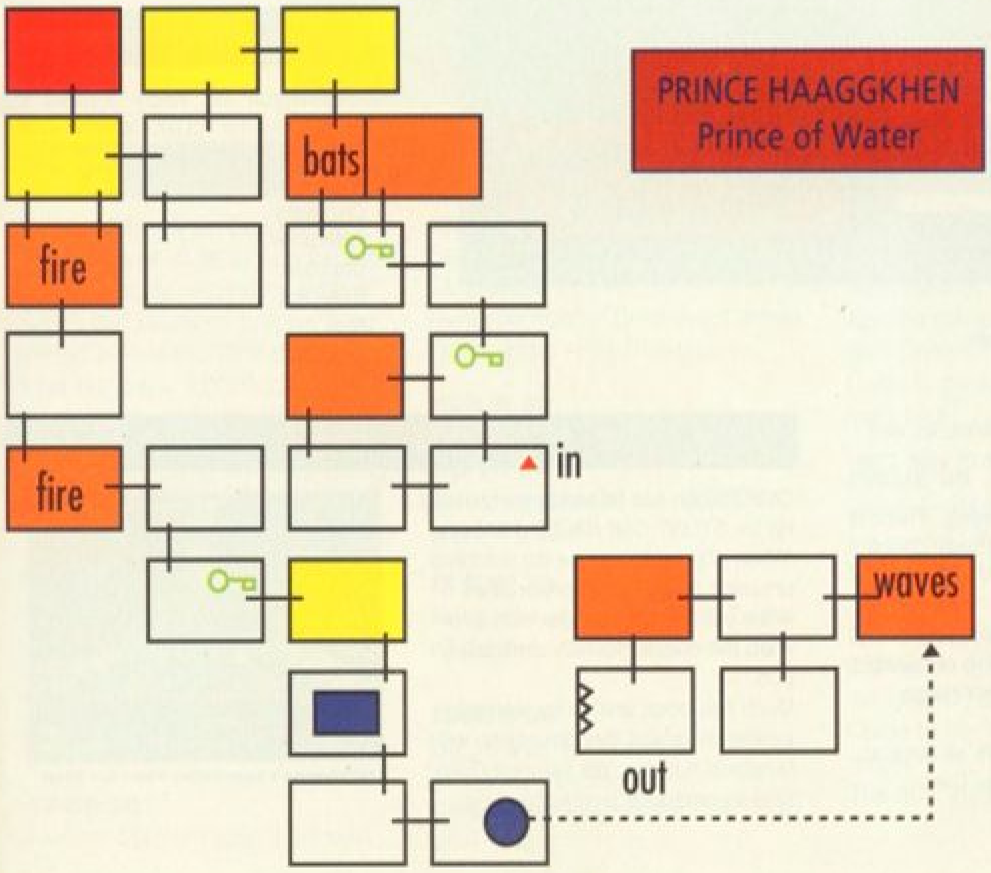
Adam quickly beat up the dragon, got up and brushed himself off. Then very casually he continued giving us his Tips on the world of Drakkhen.

HINTS FOR FISTICUFFS:

Engaging the hostile inhabitants of the Drakkhen Isle is the best way of improving your experience, as well as gaining armour, weapons and other items. At the beginning of the game this is easier said than done, as most things seem far stronger than you. In order to help you to determine whether to stand and trade punches or flee with your tail between your legs there follows a list of creatures and how difficult they are to defeat.

- **Hunchback Guards:** At first these are difficult to defeat and should be handled by your warrior and scout, if possible.

PRINCE HAAGGKHEN
Prince of Water

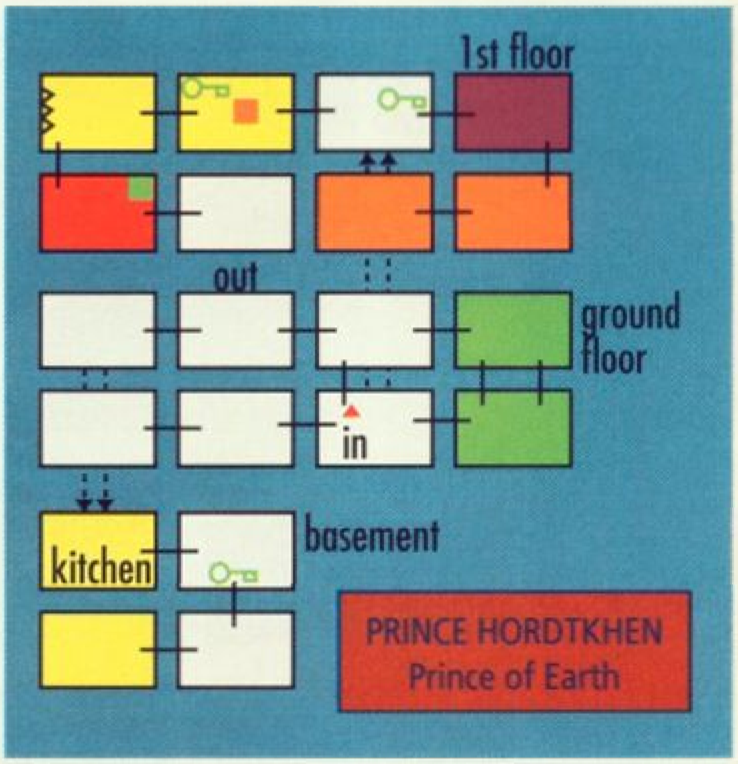


KEY

Where the Drakkhen Prince and Princess's are found	🟥
Locked Doors	O┳
Pools of Water	▣
Locations of Armour and Weapons	🟩
Chapels	🟥
Rooms which contain items; spell books, rings, sceptres and vials	🟨
The location of powerful foes - such as Lords and Knights	🟧
Doors with nasty teeth	☐

- **Lizard Guards:** These are easier to handle and often yield bucklers and simple weapons. Low level magic users should still avoid them.
- **Drakh Soldiers:** These are like the lizard guards but with spiky armour. For level one characters these are hard to handle and should be dealt with by warriors.
- **Bubbling Slime:** A poisonous annoyance which can be dealt with.
- **Blue Snakes:** These are quite easy to kill and yield a large number of experience points. However, they may poison a character during combat, and these should be dealt with by the priest using his second spell.
- **Scorpions:** Again, these creatures are hard to kill at first, and will usually poison one of your characters. Let your priest heal this quickly.
- **Large Snakes:** As with scorpions, although slightly easier to kill.
- **Drakh Knights:** These are large creatures wearing orange cloaks. At first they are extremely hard to defeat and should be avoided until your warrior is at least level two or three.
- **Flying Wyverns:** These come in all shapes and colours are fatal to all low level characters. They do, however, yield powerful items and high experience points.
- **Moaning Undead:** These skeletoid apparitions are quite a handful for some time, but can be killed with either brute force or spell number eleven in the booklet.
- **Laughing Devils:** These little jokers are very dangerous even when your characters are up at level three or so.
- **Centaurs:** Violent and dangerous, these creatures should not be fought unless you have strong, well-armed players.
- **Rock Monsters:** These have a wicked punch and can only be damaged by strong characters with good weapons.
- **Drakh Lords:** These are tall creatures with fancy orange-silver head-dresses. They are extremely powerful and can paralyse your characters with magic. Treat with caution !!
- **Giant Trolls:** These creatures are found in the more hazardous palaces and are extremely dangerous and strong. They can take and give many hits. It is best to send one powerful, invisible character to attack them.
- **Dragons:** These mainly appear in the Desert and the area around the Firestones. They are deadly and must be defeated as quickly as possible.

These creatures are listed in order of increasing difficulty. Those at the bottom end would overwhelm new characters without a blink, and even highly experienced characters, up to levels eight and nine and beyond will find them testing. After defeating powerful foes it is a good idea to save play at that point to guard against losing valuable experience points.



ITEMS OF POWER:

During exploration you will inevitably come across rings and sceptres, as well as various potions. These rings and sceptres usually enhance one of your characters stats, or give them a special ability.

Rings: Invisibility, Impalpability, Recuperation, Power & Understanding. There is also one which, when worn, appears to do nothing; however, it actually doubles the hits your character gives and is thus very useful.

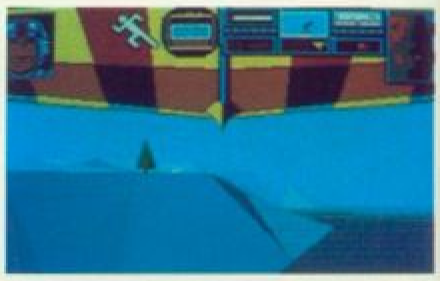
Sceptres: As with rings.

Weapons: Daggers, Bludgeons, rods and swords are the basic weapons. However; large swords, Scimitars, Bows (arch's) and Drags are also obtainable – usually from the higher level creatures. Weapons with extra power range from +1 to +3.

Suddenly Adam stops his lecture. "LOOK OUT !" he shouts. We all duck as a mutant cucumber leaps at him. Tune in next month for Drakkhen- The Complete Guide Part Three "The Quest for Tears"...

MIDWINTER

(AMIGA)
Quick tips, thanks to C. Vandornn from Northern Ireland...



Mike Singleton's gargantuan Microprose strategy game, *Midwinter*

AT THE START OF THE GAME:

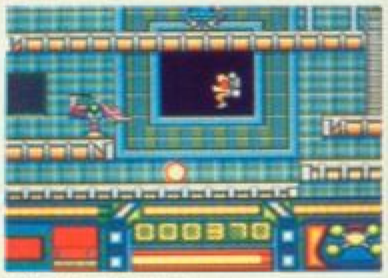
You are on skis. Don't stop to snipe. Get as quickly as you can to the nearest garage. You need missiles against the bombers. Try to get a Wolf snow-buggy. You can dodge the mortars on skis the same way as on a buggy: turn quickly, 90 degrees and speed off. If you stop to snipe the mortars will get you. When you get the snow-buggy speed to your next point while blasting the bombers as they appear.

FOR INVULNERABILITY

Against missiles: Whether you are skiing or driving a snow-buggy, the moment you hear the missile being launched, stop immediately and begin to turn around. Keep turning on the spot. The missile will narrowly miss you then come back and keep pace alongside you for a while until it finally speeds off to clobber someone else not so smart.

Against mortars: Watch for the bomber. It will always come over the horizon in front of you. If you are stopped, wait until it is approximately half way to you (otherwise it may be able to dodge your missile) then blast it. If you are moving fast blast it the moment it appears over the horizon. If a bomber does manage to drop mortars turn 90 degrees quickly and speed off.

STRYX (ST)



Stryx from Psyclapse

Here's a quick one, thanks to Evan Scarlett...
Press the "HELP" key and "M" at the same time to replenish energy.

ASTRO MARINE CORPS

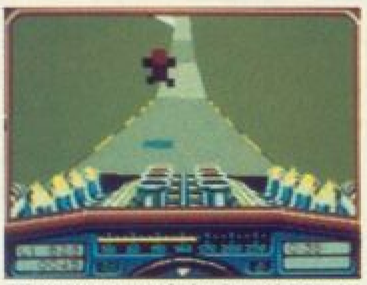
R.Farrington has kindly donated the level codes for ASTRO MARINE CORP on the Amiga they are:

Nostromo
Discovery
Enterprise
Dagoban
Replicant
Krull
Metropolis

IGNORE THIS!

Colin Wilson has this extremely useful tip for *STUNT CAR RACER*. He says 'When playing the game do not keep pressing the joystick forwards as when you go over a jump with it forward the engine sounds completely poo.'

Much has been written by learned gentlemen about this obsession with lavatorial humour. We suggest Colin seeks immediate psychiatric help.



Microprose's superlative Stunt Car Racer

FLOOD (ST)

FLOOD (Amiga, St)
Richard Edwards, Richard Hadden and Evan Scarlett are all drying out after sending some passwords for Electronic Arts' FLOOD. Mr. Edwards claims that password 3 is QUIZ but Mr. Hadden and Mr.Scarlett are ganging up on him and saying it is QUIF.

LEVEL	PASSWORD
1	FROG
2	YEAR
3	QUIF or QUIZ
4	LONG
5	WORD
6	FRED
7	WINE
8	GRIP
9	TRAP
10	THUD
11	FRAK
12	VINE
13	JUMP
14	NILL
15	FOUR
16	GRIT
17	ZING
18	JING
19	LIDO
20	POOL
21	HATE or MATE
22	REED
23	LIME
24	QUID
25	WING
26	FLEE
27	GIGA
28	HEAD
29	LOOP
30	SING
31	JOUX
32	PINK
33	GOGO
34	LETS
35	QUAD
36	BRILL
37	EGGS
38	HENS
39	NAIL
40	SOAP
41	FOAM
42	MEEK

TNT SURVIVAL GUIDE

Part 3A of Jon's Hacking Guide...
In order to give you the WHOLE of Jon's third hacking guide, without cutting it to pieces, we have split it up over the next few issues, sorry Jon !!

Citadel cheat:
Okay then, so what did I want to do to Citadel that I didn't do to Bombuzal? Well, I wanted to have more than just a puny reprogrammed space bar and immunity and I didn't want to waste time by removing what I class as bugs (noticed the one on the title screen? Go through the attract sequence using the space bar). Basically, what I had in mind was "better".

O.K. mystery lovers check out the plot, weigh up the evidence and see how quickly you can work out how the final cheat will look! As I weaved my naive, nonchalant path through the Gothic architecture, something struck me that made me feel uneasy: I could lose energy, worse still, I could die. Luckily I was gifted with the same amount of lives as one third of a cat, which was just enough to prompt me to shut up and get on with the cheat.

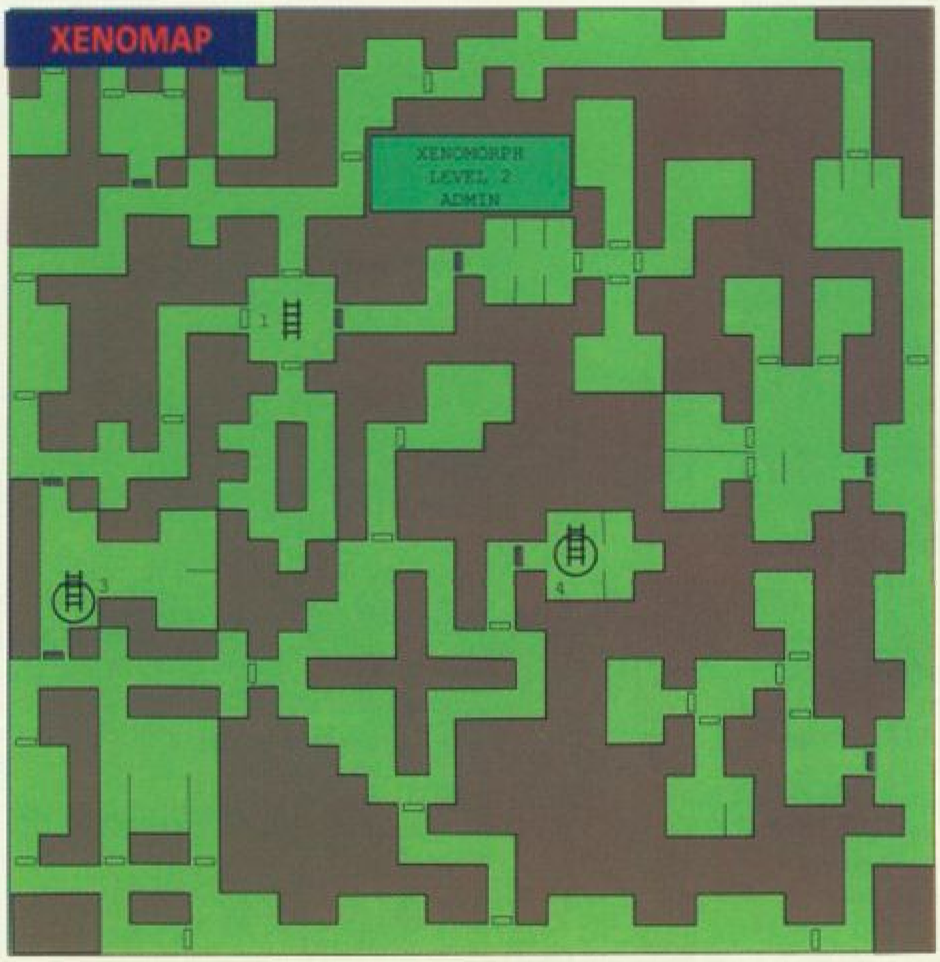
Firstly, a quick explanation: I talk a lot about removing routines and instructions. It isn't possible to have a void in memory, so removal normally entails telling jumps to carry on to the following piece of code, so it does nothing, or jumping around routines. I could just as easily change the code to give you an extra life every time you die but that is hardly necessary.

As usual I will start the day by finding unlimited energy. There are only two areas where the energy you lose is always the same, when you get hit by a bullet and when you crash into an alien. Because you lose four energy for both of these I could have looked for code that subtracted four away from things. Instead, I looked for code that subtracted anything.

Oops. I got a whole list of subtracts but none of them subtracted four. There is a simple technical reason for this connected to the string of bytes I searched for, so I wasn't concerned. I systematically removed and tested all the subtracts, hoping to find something useful. Eureka! One of them gives infinite lives to the players drone. I also found some suspect code that subtracted zero, effectively doing nothing.

Oh dear Martin, you've used self modifying code, and after saying how naughty it is (self modifying code can directly change itself to mean something different, a very questionable technique indeed). I tested the new found subtracts and found that they executed as the traps opened (sounds like something worth coming back to me, but not just yet).

Using a more direct method to find the subtracts I was looking for produced results. With them came another two that executed as the player changes levels or sides – nothing to do with energy loss but I shall return to them later as they can put me onto the trail of bigger things.



XENOMAP

THE ACE GUIDE TO SOLUTIONS!

A recent letter from Ben Hallifax said the same thing as hundreds of others, namely requesting a list of guides and solutions that we have printed before and their respective issue numbers. (Unfortunately, short tips are not included). So here it is, a comprehensive guide starting from issue 29 !! (We aim to please).

ISSUE 29
Dungeon Master Guide (part one) - Les Rigden
AD&D and *Bard's Tale* - Colin Taylor
Batman- the Movie - Adam Morley

ISSUE 30
Dungeon Master Guide (part two)

ISSUE 31
Space Ace - David Williams and Chris West
Dungeon Master Guide (part three)
Future Wars - Phil Thompson

ISSUE 32
Dungeon Master Guide (part four, final part)
Complete guide to Y's - Jojo Cicero and Mark Cook

ISSUE 33
No guides or solutions, but loads of shorties

ISSUE 34
Castle Master - Incentive
Midwinter - Microprose
Guide to hacking on the C64 (part one) - Jon

ISSUE 35
Drakkhen Guide (part one) - Adam Morley
Xenomorph (part one) - Alan Coates
Guide to hacking on the C64 (part two)

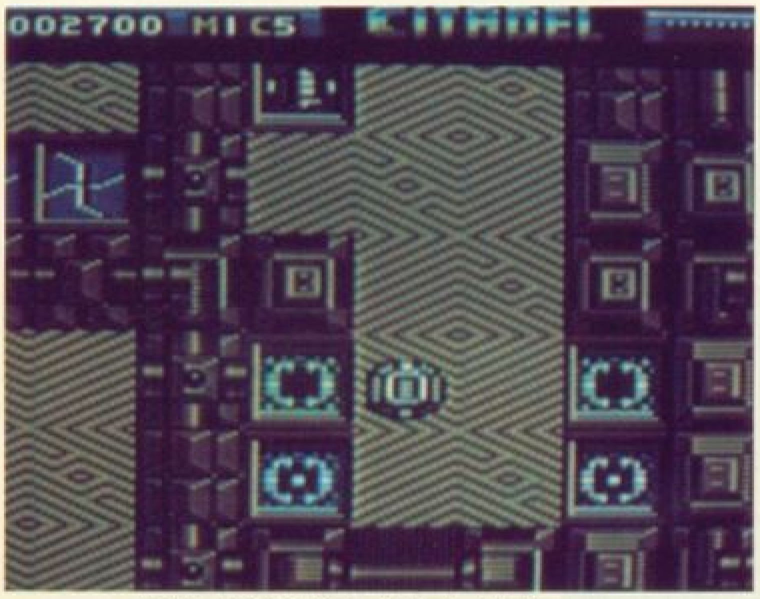
ISSUE 36
Defender of the Crown (mini players guide) - Paul Thomas
Lots of shorties

ISSUE 37
Drakkhen (part two)
Xenomorph (part two)
Guide to hacking on C64 (part three)
The ACE guide to solutions.

The drone and I could now roam through the citadel without being killed by nasty aliens. The laser doors don't take off energy however, they just kill you outright. I looked at the code that took hit points off the monitor – if your energy falls into the minus region a branch is taken to another routine which instructs the rest of the program to go through the death sequence. There are only two branches to the death routine so death from a laser door must jump straight to it. I was right, removed the jump and hey presto...immortality.

HEAVIER METAL

It doesn't seem very fair to start with such a feeble weapon, it would be much nicer to have something more powerful. There are only two things that happen in the game that could start me on the trail for the location which determines what weapon the player owns. The first is the sound effect when you collect it but that sound effect can mean many things. The second is the on-screen indications in the panel. I'll use that.



Citadel on the C64 – it's secret's plundered by Jon

I need to find exactly where in memory the number in question is. I need three values. The first value is a location which tells me in which, out of four possible blocks of 16K, the screen lives and the second is where, in 16 possible blocks of 1K, the screen lies in that 16K area. The third is how far down the screen the weapon character lies. Knowing that the start of the screen is also the start of the 1K memory area mentioned earlier, I could calculate the position of the weapon character (understand ?).

I found three stores to the location I got from the above calculations, the first was the one I was looking for, the second store I found made the third one a waste of memory because it was just a repetition of something the second store had already done. Nearby the first store, was a load from the location that held the weapon number. As I have been doing an all occasions, I jotted down appropriate memory locations along with various notes and continued onward.

Time to find out how to use the sound effect generator. A simple job, I just looked around the memory area where the lassoo actuator program was and it wasn't far from sight. I wrote a little program to play through all the sound effects and noted down the values of any interesting ones (along with explanatory notes like "Wroww", "Bodoo" and "Bootch") I paid particular attention to the monitor's engine noises. I also revealed some more bad programming: a store to make sure a location held specific value, sadly the location was never affected by anything else, so the store was pointless.

(To be continued next month, together with listing...)

CONSOLE TNT CORNER

We apologises for the small Console corner this month. Please keep sending us your tips for the consoles.

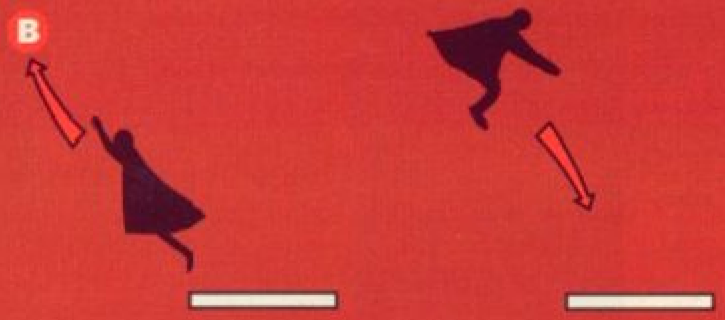
BATMAN

NINTENDO GAMEBOY
From our old friend Dale Wilks

Batman is one of the most enjoyable games to appear on the Gameboy yet, but it's even more fun when you know what to do! The Japanese instructions aren't very helpful, so here's a helping hand.

When faced with a particularly high or long gap, it is important to remember that holding down the jump button will make Batman jump further. For the longest possible jumps, you have to keep holding the button down until he lands on the other side. Batman can also change direction in mid-air; any bonus which seems impossible to get can usually be got by jumping of the end of a platform, and changing direction after collecting it, to fall back on the platform.

Remember, you must keep the button held down, otherwise you won't get back again! See Diagram...



Here's a run down of all the bonuses:

B – Bonus of 5000 points
I – Batwing speed increase (MAX 6)
A – Batarang
S – Shot (limited range – not very good.)
N – Shot (Long range)
W – "Wiggly" gun – can fire through walls
P – Power shot – similar to above but does not oscillate up and down
T – Laser

Smoke – Smart bomb
Bathead – Extra life
Batwing – Rotates around Batman and acts as shield (4 MAX)
Heart – Extra energy
Gun – Weapon power up
Inverse Gun – weapon power down

Killing the Joker at the end of level one is very easy; start by shooting him three times and then run back to the far right of the screen. Turn and keep firing, and when the Joker jumps for the second time, run under him to the other side of the screen. Keep shooting at him, and when he gets close jump over him and run to the far right again. Repeat this pattern until he dies.

OH YES...

Don't forget to switch off the Powerbase of your Sega Master System before inserting a cartridge. You have been warned!

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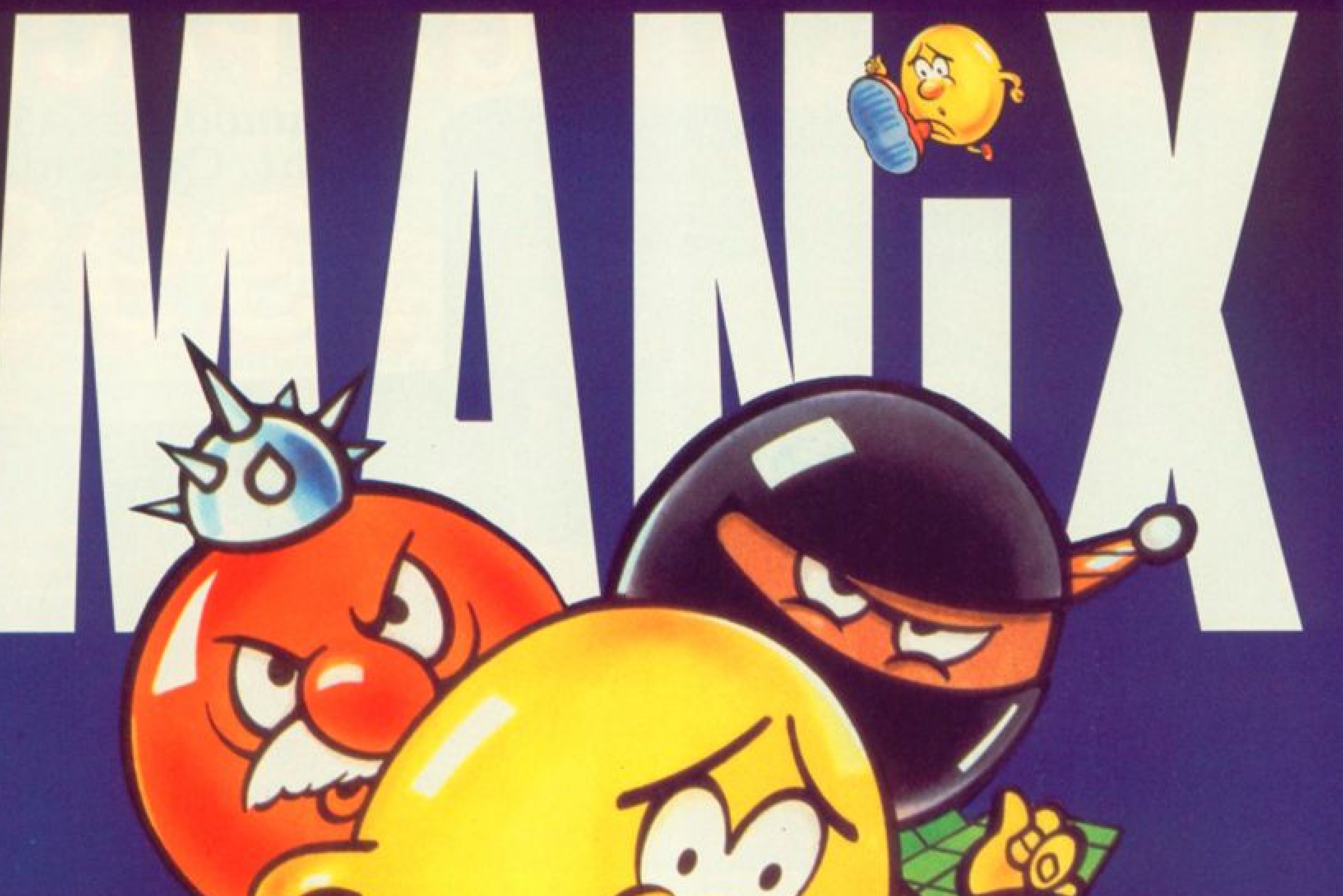

Atari screen shots

It's a world gone mad! Bombs drop from the sky, playing havoc with the natural order of *fat Filbert's* verdant land. *Filbert's* got to see to it that every square foot is set back to normal - that's a lot of work for our rotund hero. The trouble is, the bombs keep on coming, spikes, acid and ninja balls keep interfering and there's not much time left to get the job done. Fear not *Filbert!* Throw the tin cans, pick up the potions, drink the tea and you may just manage to clear up the situation. And don't forget, if the going gets too tough you can enlist the help of a friend and work as a team - just try not to get in each other's way!

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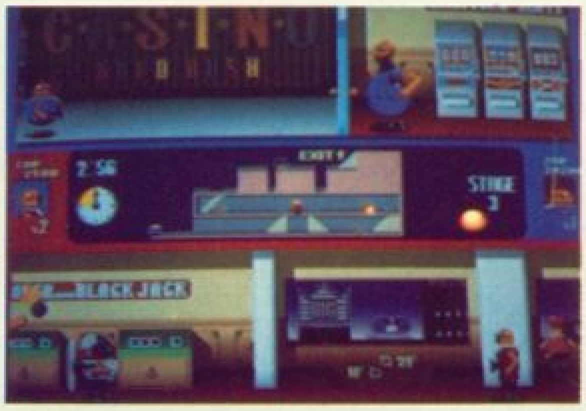
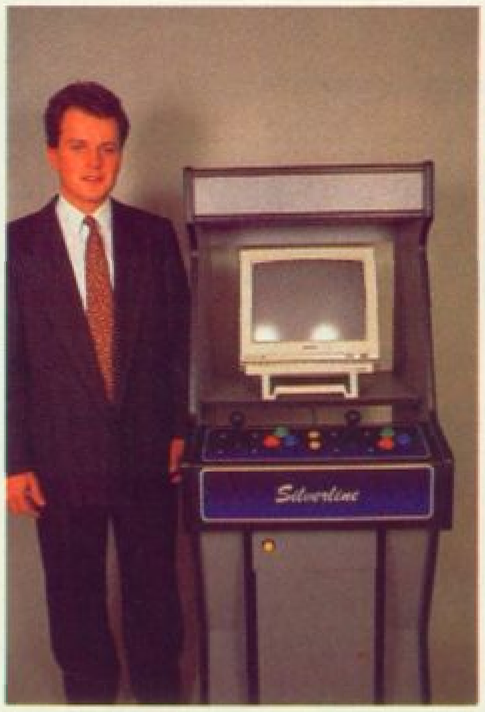
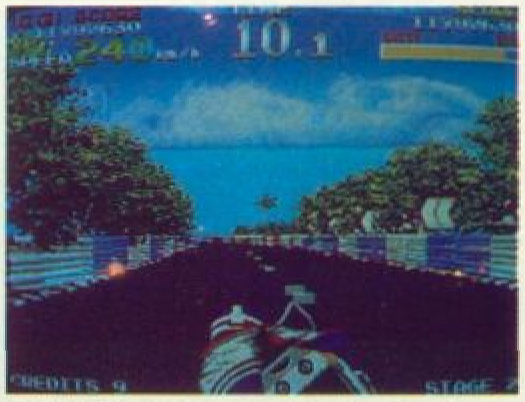
MILLENNIUM



THE BONANZA BROTHERS will find great favour, with it's slow paced thoughtful action and a Simpsons-like graphic style. Highly enjoyable.



➤ Robert Stallibrass, boss of Active, exhibits his new tie and JAMMA-compatible home arcade deck.



RACING HERO is the latest Sprite Basher from Sega, being a quality motor-cycle game, reputed to be very challenging in the later stages. Nice game, but you might prefer the breath-taking movement of Taito's WGP.

WE'RE JAMMIN

The latest arcade releases plus news of how to play real arcade titles in your own home – John Cook reports...

Active Sales is a well known company in the trade, who considerably upped its public profile recently by marketing PC Engines adapted for use in the UK. Now those same cuddly bunnies have come up with an idea that lets you – the General Public – play existing arcade titles, 100% genuine, in the comfort of your own four walls.

Available in software shops from mid-September onwards, Active is at great pains to emphasize that this unit is not a games console, but a genuine home arcade machine. There's no doubt about that, as the unit, 5'2" tall by 23" square, is an adaption on an existing arcade cabinet manufactured by Silverline, well known in the arcade trade.

The unit itself is an upright cabinet, with the usual two joystick, three fire button configuration – but with one difference. No monitor. You supply the monitor – which neatly fits into the top of the cabinet, accommodating up to a 20" screen. The outputs available are SCART, RGB and PAL – suitable for almost any CRT you will have available.

What do you do for software? You use JAMMA compatible PCB boards – the arcade industry standard. All the games you play in arcades which are not dedicated, sit-in units are powered by JAMMA boards, so in theory, you could play any of the genuine articles... but you wouldn't have to 'pay to play'!

However, rather than let everyone loose on the bare JAMMA circuit boards, Active are encasing them in rigid plastic cases, which also ensure that you plug it in the right way, vital for continued functioning of the board, the unit and you!

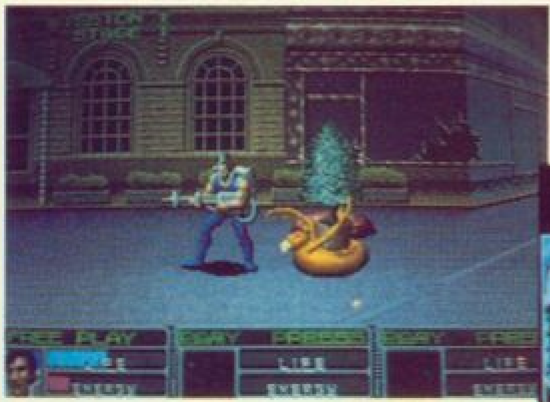
The cabinet will come already with a game plugged in and the price, not fixed at present, will be from £300-340.

The upside is that you can play the real thing – absolutely 100% authentic arcade games with no modifications or compromise, because it's exactly the same software/hardware configuration. The downside is the software and the price. New JAMMA boards (say Raiden in this issue) sell in the range £500-800. Ouch! The thing is, the older the game gets, the cheaper the board... as the arcade owners trade in/sell off old boards which are now bringing in less money, for the newer games.

Therefore, Active has at least 10 games for sale at under £50, like *Ghosts and Ghouls* and *Silkworm*. But bear in mind they'll be second hand, albeit reconditioned, and Active can only supply a three month guarantee on any one board. You name the board, however, and they'll quote you a price for it - or if you are technically competent, you could search the small ads of the arcade trade rag, Coin Slot, for bargains.

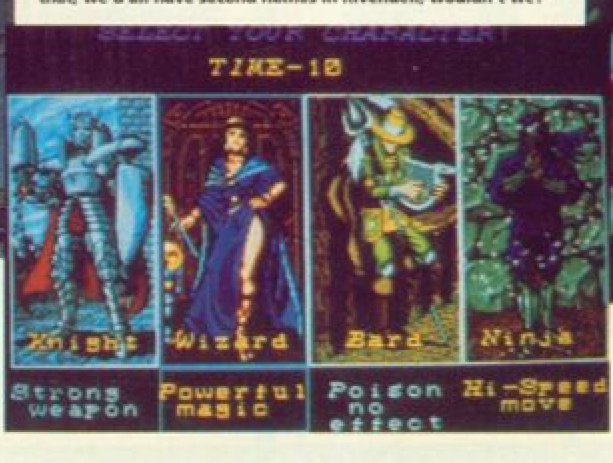
For manic arcade enthusiasts with money to spare, there's no doubt that this is the real thing – and there'll be a ready supply of JAMMA boards for the foreseeable future, either encased (from Active) or via the arcade trade. In other words, it's a must!

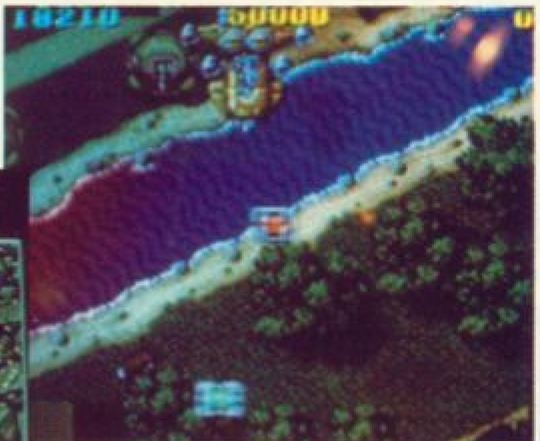
The more casual gamer, however, must be aware that purchase of a console, such as the Sega Genesis/Megadrive, is cheaper and will allow you access to damn good imitations of the latest games at around £30-40 rather than the pure authenticity of the JAMMA board at over ten times that price.



ALIEN STORM. Sega has been busy again this month. *Alien Storm* is a fine horizontally scrolling blaster that uses the same graphic style as *Golden Axe*, but packs even more in. Highly recommended, but be aware that having a telephone box mutate into a gooey alien lifeform before your eyes may well loosen your grip on reality.

▼DARK SEAL. Lastly, a new PCB from Data East who has been on song recently. Alas *Dark Seal* brings that sequence to an end – an isometric pixie bash with little to commend it, despite perfectly workmanlike presentation. What makes the difference between this lackluster effort & something fab, like *Magic Sword* from Capcom (reviewed next month). If we all knew that, we'd all have second homes in Rivendell, wouldn't we?





RAIDEN. High on the PCB chart is *Raiden* – another vertical scrolling *Tiger Shark* clone. Does the world need another of these games? You, the punters, keep putting the money in the slots, so apparently the answer is, yes!

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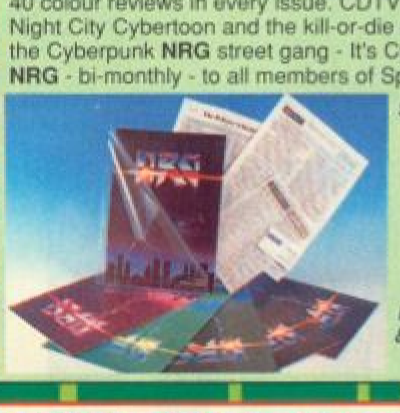

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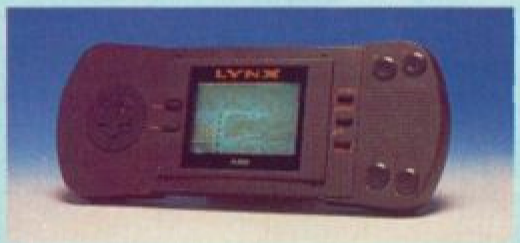

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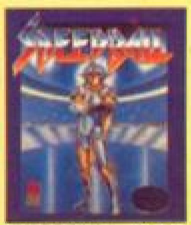

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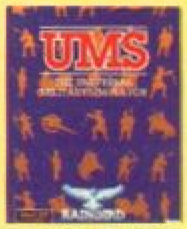

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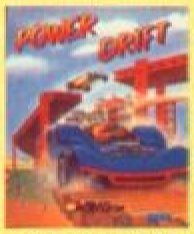

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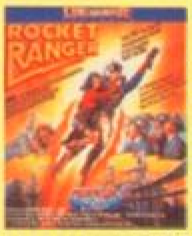

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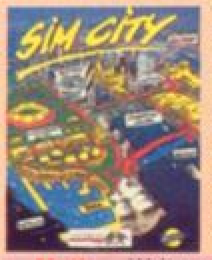

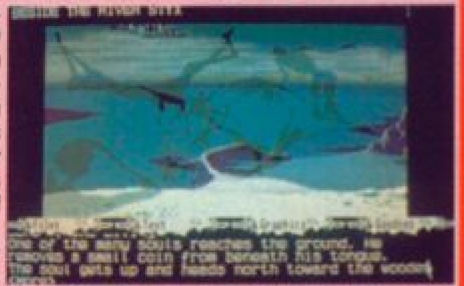

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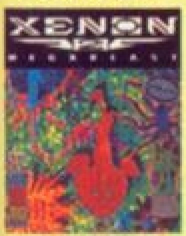

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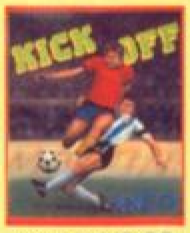

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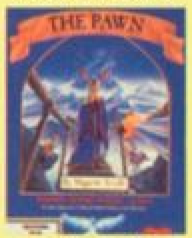

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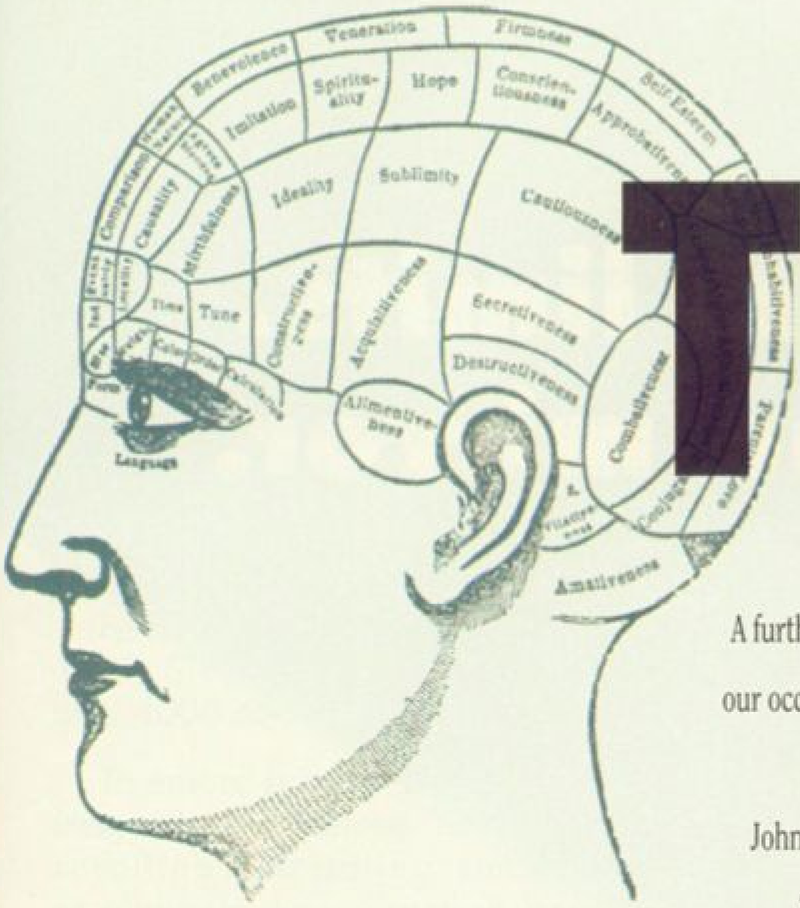


Think!

A further instalment in our occasional series on classic games... John Minson puts his *Think!*ing cap on

At a time when most software was still developed in-house, David Bishop, Beth Wooding and Chris Palmer realised that even the best programmer is not necessarily a brilliant creator of original specifications. As Tigress Designs they set out to change that.

The team came up with the C64 *Golf Construction Set* for Ariolasoft, which was well up to par, and insisted their names were removed from Domark's *View To A Kill* following (quote) 'artistic differences'. But probably Tigress's most impressive offering was a game with only a handful of rules.

MIND OVER MATTER

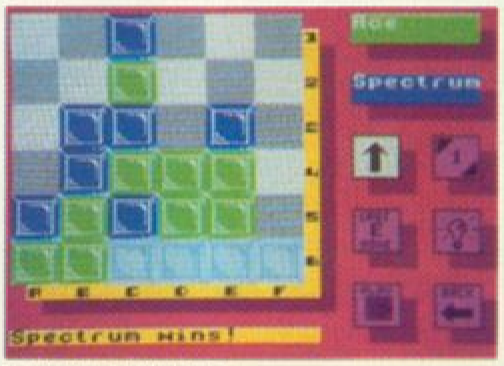
Designers of the first generation of computer entertainment often looked to traditional board games for inspiration. Chess, Draughts, Backgammon and Reversi (Othello) were all staples of those early home machines. Effectively, *Think!* is also a board game... but one you could never transfer to a board!

The playing area is a six by six grid, across which two opponents take it in turns to slide different coloured counters a square at a time, one from the bottom, the other from the right hand side. Once counters reach the far edge, they vanish. The aim is to create a line of four counters, vertically, horizontally or diagonally.

That is essentially all there is to it. However like all the best games, the simplicity of the rules belies the sophistication of strategies available. Every time a new counter is moved onto the board, all the counters in the same row are pushed one space further along and, equally importantly, any counters which cross the row are moved as well, along with any spaces.

As each game develops, the intersection of rows and columns becomes increasingly complex, with each new counter shifting both players' attempts at building lines. It's all too easy to put your enemy in a victorious position – or worse, accidentally complete a winning line for them – if you don't study the board carefully.

The thrust of attack must be balanced by the necessities of defence. A straightforward attempt to pile a line of four counters onto the board is too easily defeated. Instead each player has to attempt more subtle patterns which can eventually be shaped into a winning combination. Tigress's skills didn't rest with the game's mechanics though. From the very first screen, where you select options, there's a sense of unity which was often missing from the 8-bit scene. The icons imitate a Mac style environment; quite something for Spectrum users more accustomed to attribute clash.



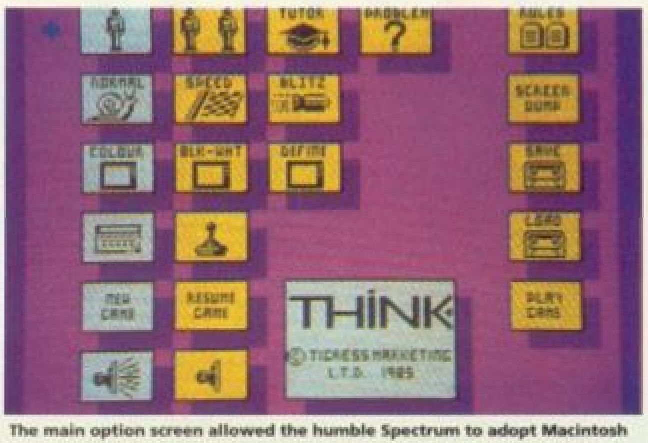
As the two sides battle for supremacy the board becomes an increasingly complex pattern of counters. Every move could open up a winning line for either player.

> *"Effectively,* Think! *is a board game – but one you could never transfer to a board!"*

Think!'s gameplay options covered the usual, such as two player or human against computer and sound on and off, as well as more esoteric choices. You could, for example, play an un-timed game, have each move against the clock or set a time to complete the game. There was also a tutorial mode, with the computer marking your moves, and a problem solving option, which allowed you to create your own teasers.

Variations during play were also comprehensive. Apart from returning to the main control screen, perhaps to change from a one to a two player game, there was the opportunity to load and save games in progress and even dump screens. Actually, this last one was probably going a bit far. Did anybody ever store a gallery of their greatest victories?

Think! was a brilliant brain-teaser, fast enough to fill in the odd idle minute, addictive enough to keep you playing into the small hours. Elegant in its simplicity, limitless in its strategies it makes you wish software designers today would stop copying each others ideas and... well - think!



The main option screen allowed the humble Spectrum to adopt Macintosh icon style. And the Speccie had one thing the Mac never did – attribute clash!

HALL OF FAME

How does a game qualify for the Hall of Fame? It may have been a best seller in its day or overlooked and underrated. But one thing's for certain, it led the field, either creatively or technically. Clones don't qualify, however competent. And it's got lasting appeal. It's the program you still want to play after years - not weeks. So if you've got any suggestions, drop us a line.

THOUGHTLESS GENERATION

After Ariolasoft's withdrawal from the UK, *Think!* reappeared as a £1.99 cheapie on the Firebird Silver range. Following the sale of Telecomsoft to Microprose, the budget label was dropped and though certain titles were sold, *Think!* was deemed too old to bother reviving.

This is short-sighted. Nobody would suggest scrapping chess because it's been around for centuries. A good game is always a good game and *Think!* was a classic. Though its simplicity might make it look skimpy as a £25, 16-bit release, it could attain cult status as a budget title. Personally I'd love to see it in a pop-up version for MS-DOS; it's the ideal diversion for PC owners whose cerebella's are being turned to sago by their spreadsheets.

Find out its limits.
Look in the mirror.
ATARI
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1040STE

Introducing the powerful new Atari 1040 STE. With such an awesome machine, we're convinced the only limits you'll come across are your own.

Based on the incredibly successful 1040 STFM, the 1040 STE itself goes beyond the limits of its predecessor.

The 'E', by the way, stands for 'Enhanced'. But once you've discovered its amazing array of features, you may consider 'Enhanced' to be the understatement of the decade.

Perhaps the most outstanding feature of the 1040 STE is its graphics. Its palette contains over 4000 colours (all right, 4096 to be exact).

To ensure precise and realistic images, the STE features 'hardware scrolling', enabling smooth scrolling in any direction and split-screen effects. And, with the SM124 monitor, you'll get razor sharp black-out-of-white text that's as clear as the type on this page.

To complete the picture, it is able to 'phase-lock' its video output to an external video source, permitting direct linking to a Genlocking device.

ST SERIES
LEISURE SOFTWARE
ST SERIES
PRODUCTIVITY SOFTWARE
FIRST BASIC
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ATARI

The 1040 won't just have your eyes swivelling in their sockets. Your eardrums will also take a pounding from the 8-bit PCM stereo sound.

The new PCM (Pulse Coded Modulation) sound system's two chips allow the 1040 STE to replay high-quality sampled sounds, in stereo, without burdening the CPU. Or, for even more of an earblasting, just add a couple of RCA output jacks and power the sounds through your own stereo.

Of course we mustn't forget memory. One megabyte of RAM comes as standard. If that's not enough, the 1040 STE provides four SIMM sockets. Simply plug in some SIMM (Single In-line Memory Module) boards and boost the RAM up to four megabytes.

To help you handle all this technology, we've added even more: a Blitter chip, capable of shifting data at high speeds independent of the CPU, and a new version of TOS.

The TOS 1.6 (operating system) has an enhanced file selector with drive-change buttons, improved desktop with file move, MS-DOS compatible disk formatting, and better application installation and auto-booting facilities.

As you'd expect, there's a huge range of peripherals including hard disks, floppy disks, laser printers, colour monitors and even Megafile 44, Atari's unique 44-megabyte removable hard disk.

As well as all this hardware, there are hundreds of software programmes for the 1040 STE - we're even throwing in the ST-Series Productivity and Leisure bundles free.

The Productivity bundle features a database, spreadsheet, word processor and business graphics package, and there's S.T.A.C., FirST BASIC, Hyperpaint and Prince in the Leisure bundle.

If you're itching to get your hands on the controls, there are two 15-pin analogue controller ports (which accept paddles, light-guns and light-pens) and a 9 pin mouse port and joystick port.

With adaptors, up to six people can use the 1040 at one time. Just in case it's too much for one person to handle.

At £499.^{99} it certainly won't be too much for one person to afford.

The ideal computer at the ideal price, you may think. We think so, too. But there remains only one potential problem: not whether you'll make impossible demands of the 1040, but whether the 1040 will make impossible demands of you.

Please send me further details of the 1040 STE and other Atari products.

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Please send to Atari Corp (UK) Ltd. Atari House, Railway Terrace, Slough, Berkshire. SL2 5BZ.

ATARI 1040STE

WITHOUT IT YOU'RE JUST PLAYING GAMES

REMEMBER CAESAR?
One of Mirrorsoft's earliest titles was *Caesar the Cat*, a highly original game programmed in Hungary for Andromeda Software. Mirrorsoft were one of the first UK software companies to bring in Eastern European games (see our article on Russia last month). Other early hits included an official licensed Biggles game, plus *Dynamite Dan*, *Strike Force Harrier*, and *Games Creator*.

The Mirrorsoft team – smiling with relief after the ACE team had left! (l/r) Cathy Campos, Richard Hewison, Alison Beesley, and Darren Anderson

Bit Blitz

ACE readers get on the road to Mirrorsoft, meet the Bit Maps, and eat pizza...

The world's first Turtle conference took place amidst mounds of Pizza at the Mirrorsoft offices in South London on Thursday 19th July. The Turtles themselves kept a pretty low profile, which is just as well because they wouldn't have been a match for the assembled ACE readers, who were determined to give Mirrorsoft a good dose of the bo.

It all started when ACEr (that's ACE reader, OK?) Trevor Attridge stood up in the middle of the *Back to the Future III* demo and, in no uncertain terms, told the assembled company what he thought about licensed software and where they could stick it. There ensued a heated debate, fuelled by slices of American Hot and Spicy Beef'n'Tomato, about the pros and cons of licensed games.

'For the price you're selling it for,' growled Trevor, 'I wouldn't buy it.' Which was perhaps a little hasty because (a) we'd only seen a few screens of the demo and (b) we certainly hadn't played it. As another ACEr put it later, 'Actually, I thought it looked rather good!' and we were inclined to agree, reckoning that the screens we'd been shown revealed a distinctly above average license, but we kept our voices down in case Trevor got the bo out again.

Ironic, really, since Mirrorsoft have been at the forefront of original games design in the last few years, bringing us titles ranging from *Falcon* through *Dungeon Master* to *Bloodwych* and – in the near future – *Duster* (see panel). And nowadays, as Mirrorsoft pointed out, there's simply no money to develop original software unless you release the better-selling licensed titles every now and again to keep the pennies rolling in.

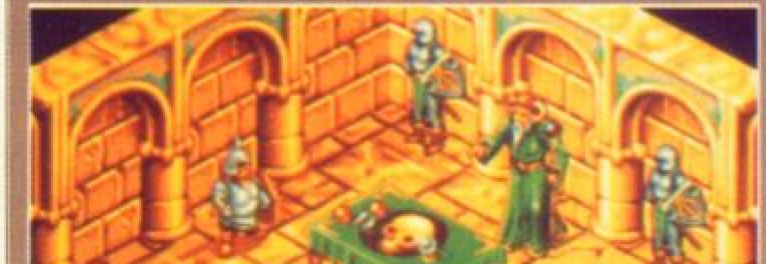
Of one thing there was no doubt – Mirrorsoft showed all the generous hospitality that a major software house can show its friends – which is what we all were when the time came to leave. Even Trevor had a tear in his eye...

CADAVER

'This is IT,' said Jim, 'It looks really marvellous – a definite buy...'

***Cadaver* is rapidly approaching completion. With over 300 screens and some of the best isometric 3D graphics ever, it does look pretty impressive. Hired as a bounty hunter, your task is to enter a castle and destroy the insane chancellor Dianos.**

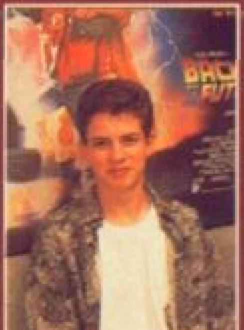
Gameplay includes mapping, puzzle solving, and arcade action. Out on Amiga and ST in September for £24.99, with a PC version to follow for an extra fiver.

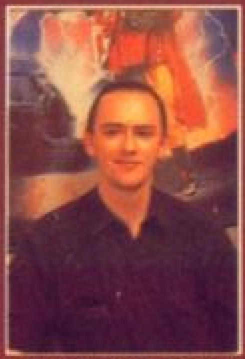


Cadaver on the Amiga – looks great, with oodles of puzzles and screens. Will this be the ultimate isometric 3D adventure? Can it outplay the legendary *Head Over Heels*? Find out this autumn...

ACE CONFERENCE ROLL-CALL

They came, they saw, they conquered...A quick photo-tour of the lads who braved British Rail and London traffic to join the ACE Mirrorsoft Conference. Will YOUR mug be on these pages next time?

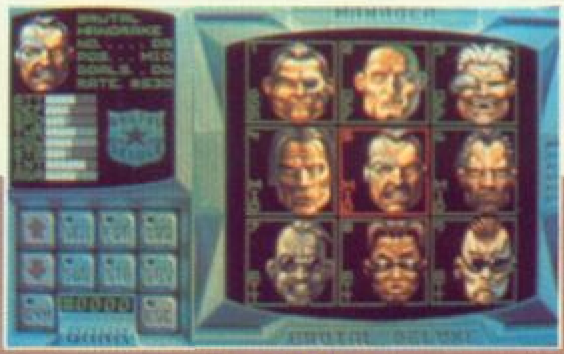

Simon Coldham was shameless in his praise of Speedball 2. A loyal Bitmap fan indeed...


Andrew Bradford: 'Duster looks as if it could be very exciting when it comes out...'

Arun Summers: particularly impressed by Cadaver. Good taste, Arun!

Daniel Pemberton enjoyed himself so much he burst into verse: '...Mirrorsoft lead the race/And the day was totally ACE!'

Trevor Attridge certainly wasn't one for currying false favours – he said exactly what he thought...and wrote to us later to say how much he'd enjoyed himself



Team management in Speedball II – much admired by the conference attendees who had experience of the original...'That's my kind of game,' enthused Simon Coldham

SPEEDBALL 2

If you liked *Speedball* you'll go ape over this one. More weapons, bigger pitch, player and team management, and a host of extra playing features. Out in the autumn for ST and Amiga at £24.99, plus the usual extra fiver for PC owners. Looks great – keep your eyes peeled for the ACE review...

SOLID GOLD!

Each month, we'll let you know about forthcoming conferences around the country. If you think you might be interested in attending one, all you have to do is send us a postcard with your name and address clearly written, together with a daytime telephone number if at all possible. You also need to tell us:

- Which conference you would like to attend. If you're applying for more than one, put them in order of preference. If no conference is listed for the software house you'd like to visit, put the software house's name down and we'll put you on the list for that conference when (and if) it is organised in the future.
- The machine you own, so that we can make sure you get some juicy free gifts for your micro!
- Your age, so that we can ensure a good spread of age groups at each conference.
- If you are a subscriber, send your application in an envelope together with the address panel from the last issue of ACE that you were sent.

Obviously we have to limit the number of people attending each conference to a maximum of 15. In addition, we have to make a nominal charge of £5.00 to help cover costs. All places are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Subscribers, however, get priority allocations for the first five places in each conference, and they may also attend free of charge. You can find out how to become a subscriber on page 30.

A couple of weeks before each conference, we'll select the lucky readers from those who have applied and inform them of the relevant details. If anyone can't attend, they'll be shortlisted for a future conference and another selection will be made for someone who can take their place.

A Bitmap Bro punches his point home as the lads discuss *Speedball II*...Spot the ACE Editor (he's the one in the highly tasteful shirt...)

MIRRORSOFT

Ever since Mirrorsoft launched its Imageworks label – which was nominated Software House of the Year within four months of its inception – Mirrorsoft have been riding high in the games market.

Now they're heading into the '90's with a particularly strong line-up. They've been particularly careful to ally themselves with good labels – including Cinemaware, Spectrum Holobyte, and FTL – and they've also got one of the country's largest CD development divisions.

They're now heavily involved in film licensing and currently have the rights to *Diehard II, Flight of the Intruder, Back to the Future,* and – the big one – *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles.* Cash from these big earners will ensure a continued flow of original titles like *Duster* from the Imageworks label...

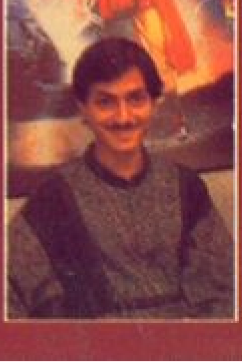
Jim Gower must be the oldest Conference member yet. 'It made my day', he said afterwards

Andrew Tulloch reckoned Duster should be 2 player – one for action, one for strategy

Stephen Keen was impressed by the originality of the Duster scenario

'Duster's going to take a lot of getting into...' remarked Anthony Virtue

Ned Ingham – 'Cinemaware's Wings needs a long range radar display so you can see more targets...'



Irfan Jamadar wasn't too impressed with BTTF2, but thought Duster was something very special

> *"Amazingly enjoyable! To charge £5 is ripping people off – it's worth far more!"*
>
> **Daniel Pemberton, ACE Conference Member**

Joe Bonar from Probe hammers home a point during the demonstration of *Back to the Future III*. 'An excellent presentation,' said Andrew Bradford, 'it was great being told exactly what was involved in producing the games...'

FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES:

Microprose 12.30pm Thursday 30 August 1990 in Tetbury, Glos.

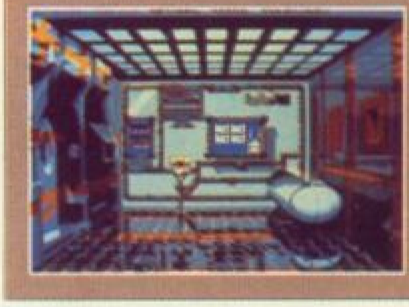
Meet the company who've produced some of the best simulations ever – and you'll even get to do some REAL flying in the Microprose plane! Unfortunately we've heard that Mike Singleton won't be able to attend, but readers can still count themselves lucky – because we've arranged for Grafgold to be there in person, so you can meet Andy Braybrook (of *Uridium* fame) and Steve Turner.

US GOLD 12.30pm Thursday 11 October 1990 in Birmingham ★ NB DATE CHANGE ★

The big one – but please note we've had to change the date from the one given in last month's issue. USG are planning a tremendous welcome for ACE readers, including hands-on testing of the latest Lucasfilm and Delphine products, and coin-ops galore. You'll also get a rare opportunity to meet console developers, following USG's Sega versions of Paperboy, Gauntlet and others (see the Console section of Screentest in this issue).

DUSTER

Set in an agricultural colony world in 3800AD, you get a job as a mutant bug hunter, equipped with armed craft that jet down from your mother ship to blast a 3D vector graphic landscape. Rich in strategy and action, Irfan Jamadar spoke for everyone when he remarked that it was '...very interesting. A true in-depth scenario...'



Duster – you're inside the mother ship, where you access the game's management functions

Apprentice

Zolo, an apprentice to the Master of the Guild of Magicians, is young, talented and wise beyond his years. Though he has another 400 years of apprenticeship to serve,

Zolo has given glimpses of brilliance. His reward is a chance to enter the Guild provided he can cross the bewitched and dangerous world of Fumo, the dragon. The world of Fumo is colourful and full of cute but intelligent inhabitants. There are many hidden levels and rooms which can only be entered after solving different puzzles.

Zolo will need all his guile, wit and mastery of his craft to solve the complex puzzles. His youth and agility will be an asset as he journeys through the bewitching colourful land of Fumo. An arcade adventure full of colour, superb graphics and intrigue, to grip your attention from start to finish.

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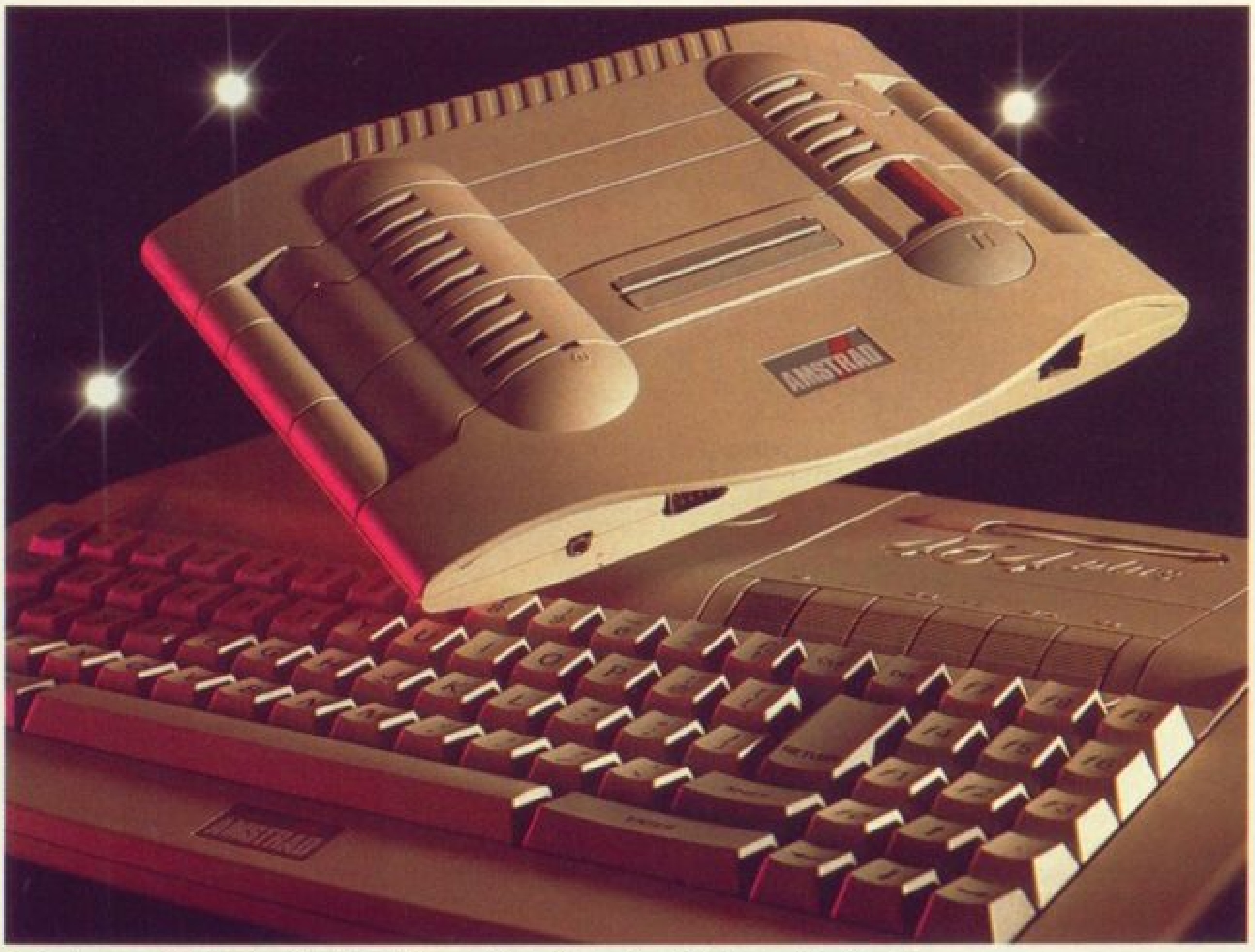


Amstrad's new machines boast multi-tasking hardware graphics routines and sound, but the new technology can only be accessed by cartridge software

This month sees the release of three new machines from Amstrad, namely the redesigned CPCs, 464 plus and the 6128 plus and Amstrad's first launch into the 8-bit console market, the GX4000. ACE brings you the definitive and unbiased review of what Amstrad hope will take them into the lead in the 8-bit micro market.

CPChoice

The key to Amstrad's new range is considerably improved graphics and sound performance, achieved through custom hardware and new firmware routines.

There's also a reasonable number of purchase options. There are three machines: two upgraded CPC's and a new console. If you just want to access the new technology, £100 will get you a GX4000 console, two paddle controllers, a demo cartridge containing *Burning Rubber*, a *WEC Le Mans* clone developed by Ocean and a few pence change. However, if you prefer the added functionality of a CPC with keyboard and storage medium (tape on the 464, disk on the 6128) AND the opportunity to play the new console games, then a new cartridge port on the CPC Pluses allows you to do so – at a little extra cost, of course.

THE NITTY GRITTY

It all sounds like a perfect strategy, but how does it work in practice?

Starting on common ground, namely the CPCs, the most noticeable change is the redesigned packaging. Gone is the 'cardboard box' appearance of long ago. They have now been redesigned to fit on the shelf with Amstrad's successful range of PCs and PCWs. Decked out in a rather fetching combination of cream and grey, with peripherals (tape deck on the 464, disk drive on the 6128) housed tidily in the rear, right hand corner of the machine (as with an Amiga or ST), they are very attractive looking machines.

Beauty is, as they say, only skin deep, and the design of the machines reveals a couple of flaws at closer inspection. On the 464, one major problem we encountered was the operation of the tape deck. The controls are sloped, and set at an angle to the keyboard. Obviously you have to press the buttons down to make them work, which is a lot easier to say than to do. For some strange reason, the buttons are designed to pivot inward, not downward, 'locking' at about a 45 degree angle from the tabletop. As the buttons are curved, this means you have to use a fair bit of pressure on them, which makes tape operation not only irritating, but downright uncomfortable.

One other niggle – on our machine the cartridge slot required a pretty hefty shove to get the cartridge properly connected. That's better than being too loose, sure, but you shouldn't have to push THAT hard! Once you start using this amount of force, the possibility of incidental damage increases proportionately.

The good news, however, is that the old keyboards, which were very 'springy' on the 6128 and rather unresponsive on the 464's, have now been replaced by a much brighter, faster and generally more solid feeling unit, with a far better arrangement of keys.

The inclusion of an extra

"We entered the home computer market in April 1984 with the CPC464, and since that time we have sold 2.5 million CPC machines. We are now offering 464 Plus and 6128 Plus customers the best of both worlds - they can continue to play their favourite games and can also enter the new world of the ROM cartridge game. And for those who just want to run ROM cartridges, we have the GX4000 console"

Malcolm Miller, Amstrad Group Sales and Marketing Director
Paris, 20th August

The GX4000 is entering the marketplace in direct competition with the Sega Master System and the Commodore 64 console (see news pages)

9-pin joystick port, plus an analogue joystick port, opens up possibilities of game design that the previous ill-fated CPC's never had. That's not to say that all the old CPC software will fall into disuse. The Pluses have total compatibility with the old machines, and why shouldn't they? After all they are essentially the same machine.

SOFTWARE POTENTIAL

Here is the real problem. Even though the machines have these new sound and graphics chips (see box), the new circuitry can only be accessed through the cartridge port. This means that any new tape or disk based CPC software developed now, will have to be exactly the same as the old CPC software. This is apparently to ensure full compatibility with past, present and future software.

Of course, you could produce cartridge software for both the Plus machines, but the cartridges don't come cheap for the software houses – which means they're certainly not going to come cheap for you. Expect to pay similar prices for cartridge software on these units to the ones you pay for 16-bit products.

To all intents and purposes, the CPC plus range is the old hardware with the new GX4000 bolted on. As such, they're good machines for a first time buyer who prefers the convenience of the monitor bundling and one-plug Amstrad approach, but they're definitely not the upgrade that CPC owners are crying out for. It's also dubious whether the price advantage of the monitor/6128 package over the Amiga is sufficient to win it a sizeable share of the market. Although an Amiga plus monitor costs substantially more, you can get the Amiga on its own for less and run it through your TV while you save up for the better display – and there's no real comparison between the Commodore 68000 machine and the new Plus range in terms of hardware capability.

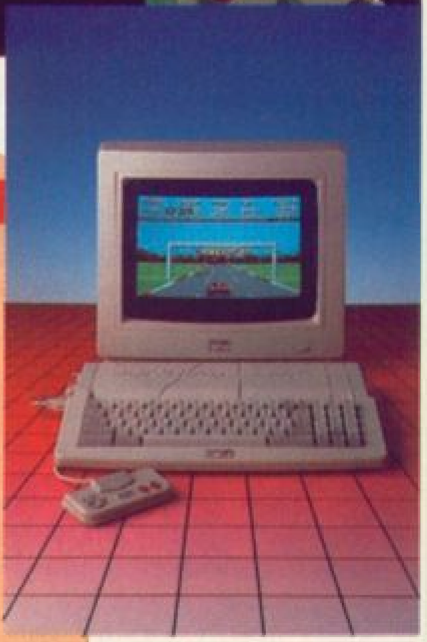
THE CONSOLE

The GX 4000, on the other hand, is a completely different kettle of fish. It seems a bit unusual to release an 8-bit machine this close to the release of the Sega Megadrive and our initial thoughts before seeing this machine were that it was a bit of a waste of time and wouldn't have a chance. After taking a good look at it, however, we can honestly say that it puts the other 8-bit offerings to shame, bar the PC Engine.

The GX4000 is the end result of 'months of work' liaising with some of the 'top programming houses in Europe', finding out exactly what they would want to see in a machine. So what you have is an 8 bit machine with a palette of over 4000 colours, true multi tasking sound and graphics capabilities and the most-used arcade routines, such as pixel scrolling and sprite generation and expansion, built into the hardware. For once this doesn't seem like hype – in fact Ocean are rumoured to be so impressed with the machine that they're giving it very comprehensive support over the next twelve months, so there'll be no shortage of software. The GX 4000 is also 'downwardly' compatible with the old CPC machines, so old tape and disk software can be rejigged for cartridge release, though naturally the old routines will not be designed to access the new hardware features.

Burnin' Rubber

The new range is certainly good looking – and despite reservations about the Plus machines, the console looks promising



The CPC6128 Plus looks the business, but suddenly you remember that at heart it's a CP/M machine! In 1990! It needs more than a cartridge port and GX4000 compatibility to make this a desirable upgrade

SOUNDING OFF

The biggest improvements made are in the graphics and sound departments. Graphics wise, the palette has been updated to include the soon-becoming-standard of 4096 colours, of which 16 can be displayed on screen at once in normal mode, or 32 by using the hardware interrupts. Hardware pixel scrolling has now been incorporated, along with hardware split screen effects, with each area of the screen using it's own palette of 16 colours. There are 16 hardware sprites available, each 16 by 16 pixels, though for some reason there is no on board collision detection.

Sound has also been improved – three channels of stereo sound, through either a stereo monitor or headphones isn't much to write home about, but the good news is that the sound chip can now be programmed to run separately from the CPU. True multi tasking with no loss of speed.

POWER AND PRICE

Here's a brief summary of the machines....

	GX4000	*464 Plus*	*6128 Plus*
Price	**£99**	**£229 (b/w) £329 (col)**	**£329 (b/w) £429 (col)**
Bundled with:	**2 Paddles Power Pack Demo cart.**	**1 paddle Monitor Demo cart**	**1 paddle Monitor Demo cart**
CPU	**Z80A**	**Z80A**	**Z80A**
Memory	**64K**	**64K**	**128K**
Medium:	**ROM Cart**	**Cassette & ROM Cart**	**3" disc & ROM Cart**
Colours	**32 from 4096**	**32 from 4096**	**32 from 4096**
Pixel scrolling?	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Split screen?	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Sound	**3 channel stereo ASG**	**3 channel stereo ASG**	**3 channel stereo ASG**
Joystick ports	**2 digital 1 analogue**	**2 digital 1 analogue**	**2 digital 1 analogue**

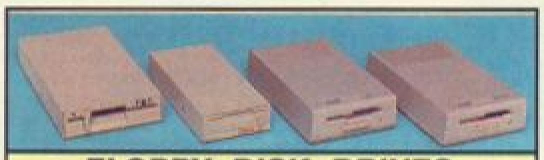
As with the CPC Pluses, there are three joystick ports (two digital and one analogue), all video connections are handled through either a scart socket, a PAL TV modulator or Amstrad's regular monitor socket. A stereo headphone socket is built into the front of the machine. Visually, it's a very tidy looking machine and one that's surprisingly sturdy, despite it's unusual size and uncanny resemblance to a Cylon attack craft.

The controllers provided with the machine are pretty standard. A cross-shaped rocker switch operated by the left thumb controls direction and two fire buttons, used by the right thumb, control specific operations within a game, such as firing a weapon, changing gears in a driving game etc. We've never been a fan of these 'compact' little controllers, and this one, with smaller controls than most, is no better than the rest. Whatever happened to joysticks?

If *Burning Rubber*, the cart supplied with the console, is a taste of what's to come, then the future looks bright. A fast, smooth colourful race game that's a fair cut above the usual racing rubbish we see on 8-bit machines, and a good argument against those who say 8-bit technology has two feet and a torso in the grave.

THE 1990 ATARI ST PRODUCT GUIDE

PERIPHERALS & ACCESSORIES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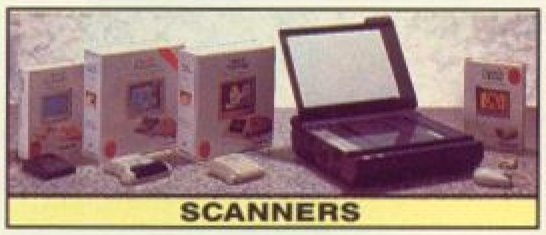
MONITORS

JOYSTICKS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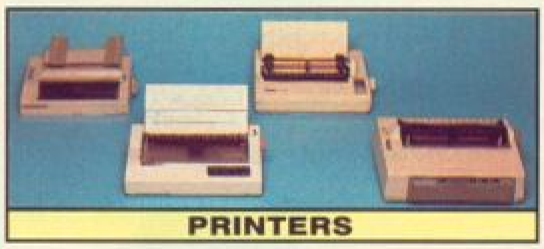
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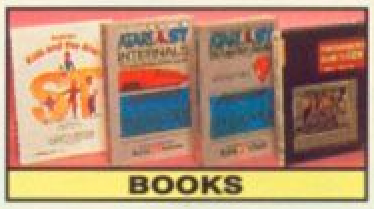
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Alex Ruranski is your man when it comes to the Pink Software pages. 'We're going to make these pages the best reference section for gamesters ever,' says Alex, 'and I hope ACE readers with questions and suggestions about software coverage in the Pinks will get in touch with me at the usual address.'

in the PINK

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David Upchurch, in charge of hardware reference information in the new Pinks. If you've got a hardware query, drop him a line. 'I'm waiting,' he says, 'so get your pens out...'

FIVE IN ONE!

Welcome to the new Pink Pages. We believe that they represent the beginning of a new phase in ACE's development as we continue to improve the magazine on a monthly basis, sharpening the design and packing in more features and exclusive coverage with each issue.

The new Pinks have got a great future. What's it all about?

First, we've appointed two new members of staff, both of whom will be taking particular care of this section. Alex Ruranski is going to build the Pinks into the country's foremost software reference section, and David Upchurch is going to the same with hardware. So that's one side of the Pink story – comprehensive reference material for the committed gamester.

The other side is entirely up to you, because it's all about communication. Both David and Alex want to hear from you – whether it be criticisms or suggestions, and Pat Winstanley, who edits the Adventureline, is also ready and waiting for your input.

If you've got questions about either hardware or software, they'll be answered here too – we have a whole team of industry experts who are at your beck and call when it comes to sorting out entertainment queries. And next month we're creating a new Pink department especially for that purpose – but the questions will have to come from you!

And to launch the new section, we've got a great console competition from Elite on this very page – and some Buck Rogers giveaways from US Gold opposite. Be proud, be perky, but above all, be pink...

THE COMPETITION

f you're console crazy, or just console curious, Elite have offered to launch the new Pink Pages by very generously giving away one each of ALL the major console machines. This is an opportunity you just can't miss to grab some of the neatest buzzboxes you can get your hands on.

What's more, it couldn't be easier. All you have to is fill in the form below, answering the questions. No trick questions, no strings attached – just tell Elite what you think and they'll enter your entry in a prize draw for one of the following machines:

Sega Master System, Sega Megadrive, Nintendo NES System, Nintendo Gameboy, and Atari Lynx.

HERE'S WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO...

1. Select which machine you would like to win.

THEN...

2. In no more than 25 words tell us why you chose this machine.

THEN...

3. Rate from 1st to 3rd choice which of the following titles you and your friends would like to see converted for your chosen machine:-

(A) *Space Ace*
(B) *Dragon's Lair*
(C) *Paperboy*
(D) *Robocop*
(E) *Hard Drivin'*
(F) *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles*
(G) *Kick-Off*
(H) *Frank Bruno's Boxing*

THEN...

4. Cut out the coupon and post it to the address in the panel.

ALL ENTRIES WILL GO INTO A PRIZE DRAW TO BE HELD 31st SEPTEMBER 1990.

Deadline for receipt of entries is the morning of that day.

STOCKMARKET WINNERS

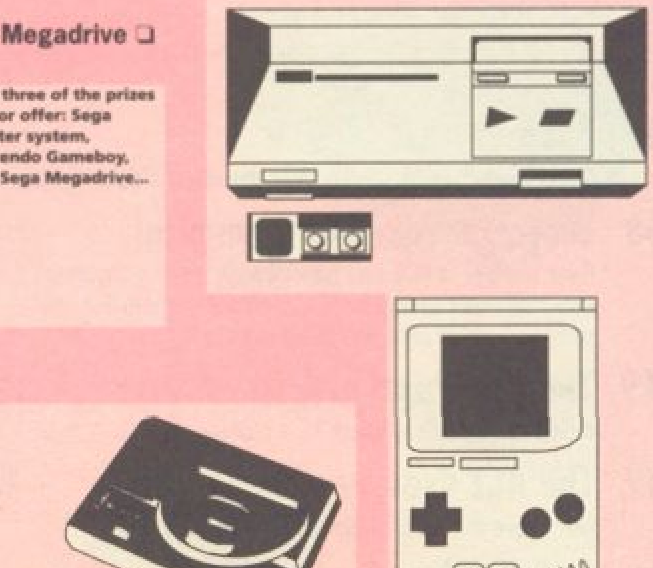
Congratulations to these lucky lads who were first out of the hat with correct predictions for the ACE Stockmarket and Charts. Jason Webb of Birmingham correctly spotted Microprose's chances to lead the software house pack on the Company Counter. Kristian Phillips of Norwich sensibly plumped (along with many others) for Ultima VI as the top PC game. Phil Maxfield (a frequent winner) won TWICE by putting a cool bet on the Cecco Collection as topping the CPC charts and also heading the draw for those who got Head Over Heels on the Spectrum. David McMahon won (for the second time, we think) his prize for spotting Kick Off 2 in the Amiga charts. Easy really. Christopher Allan of Perth spotted F19 Stealth Fighter flying high on the Atari ST, and finally Patrick Cruickshank of Perth (Pat and Chris from Perth – it must be a conspiracy) served an ACE with International 3D Tennis on the C64. Well done laddies – and the prizes, despite earlier delays, are on their way.

ELITE CONSOLE CRAZE COMPO FORM

My choice of machine should I win is (tick one): Sega Master System ☐ Sega Megadrive ☐ Nintendo Entertainment System ☐ Nintendo Gameboy ☐ Atari Lynx ☐

My name: ....
My address: ....
....
My daytime telephone number (if possible, please)............................
Why I chose the machine ticked above (in no more than 25 words)
....
....
....
....
....
My most popular choice of game is (enter letter identifying game in list):
....

(A) *Space Ace* (B) *Dragon's Lair* (C) *Paperboy* (D) *Robocop* (E) *Hard Drivin'* (F) *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles* (G) *Kick-Off* (H) *Frank Bruno's Boxing*



Just three of the prizes up for offer: Sega Master system, Nintendo Gameboy, and Sega Megadrive...

US GOLD IN THE 25TH CENTURY!

"Buck Rogers in the 25th Century is destined to be one of the biggest multi-media events of the year."

The sudden revival of Buck Rogers has come about through the famed TSR role-playing company, who in conjunction with Penguin books are about to launch "a massive range of products" including boardgames, RPG's, paperback books and graphic novels. Buck is about to be reborn.

Putting the icing on the cake for us gamesters, TSR have collaborated once again with the programmers at SSI (also jointly-involved with the Dragonlance series) to bring you *Buck Rogers – Countdown to Doomsday.*

Using a system similar to that used in the Dragonlance series, *Countdown To Doomsday* is described as a "Sci-Fi Role-Playing space opera", in which the player guides a party from the New Earth Organisation (NEO) in an attempt to foil a RAM (Russo-American Mercantile) plot to re-conquer earth, whilst engaging in planetary or space combat against a horde of enemies, along the way.

And good old US Gold are bring us the game later this year. to celebrate, they're giving away 5 copies of the Buck Rogers board game, so all you have to do is follow the instructions in the panel and post your entry pronto.

HOW TO ENTER

All you have to do is jot down the answers to the two questions below and pop them on a postcard, together with your name and address. Send your entry to ACE USG Buck Competition, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London, EC1R 3AU to arrive not later than 5th October 1990. First five correct entries out of the hat get the goodies.

1. In which year did Buck Rogers first appear?
2. Name one US Gold/SSI Dragonlance game released in the UK.

LIFE AFTER BUCK

Buck Rogers official comic-strip debut took place in January 1929. Set in a distant century where technological advancement bore little resemblance to that of the current time, Buck was seen by many as a symbol of hope for the future.

As an example of the foresightedness employed by the creators, many of the visions of Buck Rogers' world included (or perhaps predicted) inventions such as the truth gauge (lie detector) and self-developing ultra-violet print (polaroid film). In an era that didn't believe it would be possible to place men on the moon this century, Buck Rogers bucked the trend and painted a future of accomplishment and techno-triumph. While others made narrow-minded predictions of the future (see our feature in this issue on page 33.

The reemergence of our hero in what will be the year 2456 AD, could signal the start of a whole new set of possibilities.

Unfortunately, these are far from the positive visions of the future characterised by the original strip. The Earth has become a polluted ruin, controlled and exploited by an evil Martian corporation. Mars itself has been wholly modified, and Martian forces swarm through what is known as the Corporates Metroplex. Mankind although advanced, is only so because his fight for survival was perpetuated and heightened by his own abuse of the planet.

What's to say that this, like that of 1929, is not one of the very real possibilities of our future?

> ***"Buck Rogers burst upon our vision like some grander July 4th, full of rockets celebrating tomorrow."***
>
> Ray Bradbury

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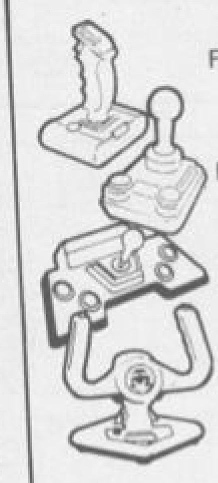

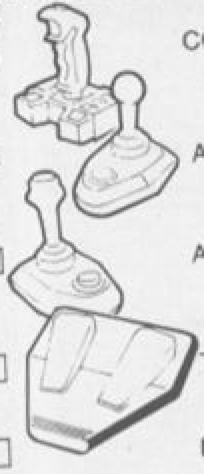

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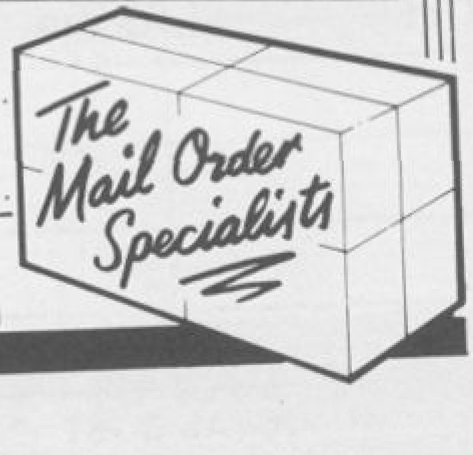

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HARDSELL

Here it is: the one and only hardware guide to give you COMPLETE details on the machines you're most likely to upgrade to, including that all-important criterion of software availability.

The ACE Hardware Guide is currently run in three different sections: 16-bit upgrade machines (this month); and consoles (next month). When space permits or circumstance dictates (as it did last month) we'll print more than one section.

ACORN ARCHIMEDES

Models: Archimedes 310, 3000, 410 420, 440
Package: keyboard, mouse and drive: keyboard mouse and drive plus monitor (colour or mono);
Memory: 3000 512K; 310 1Mb; 410 1Mb; 420 2Mb; 440 4Mb
Processor: Acorn ARM
RRP: Prices range from £789.97 for A3000 alone to £2644.60 for A440 with colour monitor
Contact: Acorn 0223 245200

IN BRIEF

Still the cutting edge of micro technology. Acorn's ARM is about the fastest thing this side of a Cray. This very exciting machine – although gathering admirers since the introduction of the A3000 – still lacks a good games software base and is best left to the enthusiast.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: 320 x 256 or 640 x 256 with normal monitors. 640 x 512 available with multi-sync monitors.
Palette: 4096
Colours: From mono up to 256 (320 x 256) or 16 (640 x 512).
TV: No
Monitor Output: Mono composite video: colour – RGB + sync.
Monitor Supplied: Depends on package bought.
Monitor Options: Acorn dedicated 14 inch medium res. colour; 12 inch high res mono; Multi-sync colour.
Sprites: 1
Speed: Blistering.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Good
MIDI: With extra hardware.
Stereo Output: Yes
Performance: 16 channels (8 stereo pairs); 6 octaves, 1 internal speaker.

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 3.5 inch – 800K
Disk Price: From £1.20 upwards.
Disk Performance: Good and fast.
Keyboard: 103 keys with programmable auto-repeat. Early keyboards have a cheap feel given the quality of the machine.
Joystick/Mouse: 3 button mouse; n support for joysticks.
Interfaces: 25 pin D parallel; 9 piN mouse; 3.5mm stereo headphone jack; 64 way din; 41612 expansion port; IEC 320 video outlet; I/O interface.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Still very limited. Some games available most software is for productivity and business.
Current Releases: See above.
Games: Most famous are *Zarch (Virus)* and *Conqueror*. But there have been several impressive one-off titles released recently.
Graphics: Potential is enormous. Some excellent packages available
Music: Like graphics, but developers remain shy.
Prospects: Limited. Even the cheaper models find it tough competing with STs and Amigas.
Software Loading: Very reliable.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As RRP
Second Hand Availability: Still scarce, some 305 and 310s starting to appear but expect to pay for them.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Return to faulty machines dealer.

APPLE MACINTOSH

Models: SE; SE30; IIcx, IIci
Package: Monitor with built-in CPU and disk drive, separate keyboard
Memory: 1Mb
Processor: SE Motorola 68000; IIcx 68882; IIci Motorola 68030
Recommended Retail Price: SE £2,195 upwards; II £3540 upwards (all ex VAT)
Contact: Apple 081-569-1199

IN BRIEF

A very expensive up-market machine for those keen on desktop publishing, WIMP systems and up-market software. Software is very expensive. Quite a few games in the US, but few over here. Good for MIDI musicians but be prepared to pay through the nose for software.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: SE 512 x 342; II 10027 x 760
Palette: SE – black and white; II (with colour monitor) 16 million.
Colours: With colour monitor – 16 to 256
TV: No
Monitor Output: Integral monitor.
Monitor Supplied: Built-in
Monitor Options: SE – use dedicate model only; II Apple hi-res monochrome or AppleColor hi-res RGB.
Sprites: None
Speed: SE reasonably fast; II very fast.SE30 and IIX/CX even faster; IIci blinding

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Good
MIDI: Third party interfaces available.
Stereo Output: SE no; II yes.
Performance: 4 channels give good performance.

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 3.5 inch – 800K
Disk Price: £1.50 – £2.00
Disk Performance: Generally fast
Keyboard: Separate with 81 keys including function keys and numeric key pad. Optional extra is the Apple Extended keyboard with 105 keys.
Joystick/Mouse: Joystick is not supported; high-quality single button mouse is supplied with machine.
Interfaces: SE/SE30 – Apple Desktop Bus connector. 2 RS232/RS422 serial; external disk drive; 96 pin Euro-Din expansion slot; SCSI – DB-25 connector; external audio amplifier. II – 2 RS232/RS422 serial; DB-25 SCSI T.

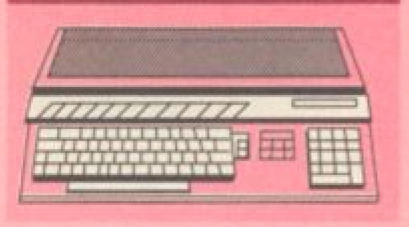
SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: A very wide base exists in all fields except games.
Current Releases: Adequate, though largely of US origin and in the business or DTP field.
Games: Very few arcade titles but plenty of icon driven adventures.
Graphics: Lots of interesting software for those interested in DIY publishing.
Music: Very well supported for MIDI software – but it's expensive to boot.
Prospects: As always, excellent – especially in business and DTP.
Software Loading: Quick and reliable.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: Generally the RRP – Macs are only sold through dealerships. Ask for a discount for cash.
Second Hand Availability: Scarce and expensive. A better market exists in older models but these are best avoided.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Apple offers Applecare – "insurance" you take out to cover the cost of repairs after the guarantee has run out.

ATARI ST



Models: Atari 520STFM; 520STE; 1040STE; Mega STs; Stacy
Package: 520 and 1040 have keyboard with built-in disk drive; Mega versions have separate keyboard. Power Pack includes 520STE with light gun, joystick and £400 of "free" software. New "Discovery" pack includes similar value software to Power pack but with an STFM and an educational bent.
Memory: 520STFM and 520STE 512K; 1040STE 1Mb; Mega ST 1, 2 or 4Mb; Stacy 2 or 4Mb. STE machines expand internally to 4Mb.
Processor: Motorola 68000
Recommended Retail Price: 520STE (Power Pack) £399; 520STFM (Discovery Pack) £299; 1040STE £499; Stacy N/A
Contact: Atari 0753 33344

IN BRIEF

Excellent as a general purpose home machine for games, small business and productivity. It's the number one choice for MIDI musicians. The ST's price still gives it a slight edge over the graphically more advanced Amiga. The new baby ST – Stacy – is tipped by Atari to be the musician's portable since it is a complete 2Mb or 4Mb ST with hard disk and mono monitor in a small box.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: Low-res 320 x 200;

medium res 640 x 200; high-res 640 x 400
Palette: STFM 512; STE 4096; Stacy 2
Colours: Black and white in high-res; 4 colours in medium-res; 16 in low-res.
TV: Yes. Not Stacy.
Monitor Output: STFM models only, others through TV modulator
Monitor Supplied: No; Stacy has integral LCD monitor
Monitor Options: Atari monitors SM124 high-res mono; SC1442 med res colour.
Sprites: 1
Speed: Fast
***NB** High resolution display is only available on monochrome monitor; medium and low res displays only available on colour monitors or TVs. Blitter fitted to late STFMs (standard on STE) improves the GEM access.*

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.
MIDI: Yes
Stereo Output: STE only.
Performance: 3 channel sound is average to good depending on software. STE features 8 bit PCM sound but no current software uses it.

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 3.5 inch – 720K
Disk Price: £1.20 to £1.50
Disk Performance: Reliable and fast. Early machines were supplied with a single-sided disk drive.
Keyboard: 96 keys including 10 functions keys. Has a cheap feel which can be improved with third party spring kits.
Joystick/Mouse: 2 Joystick ports are standard; 2 button mouse is supplied with machine. Stacy is supplied with a trackball.

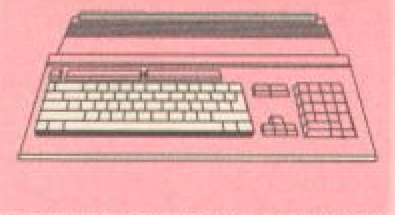
SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Excellent. A few budget titles are starting to appear now.
Current Releases: None of the major software houses ignore the ST so it is well served with plenty of good software.
Games: Across the board.
Graphics: Good with some excellent software to manipulate them.
Music: Excellent. Plenty of sound samplers, editors and MIDI software make this the musician's choice.
Prospects: Very good, but the Amiga is currently the favourite with software houses in the UK and the ST has failed to capture a market in the States.
Software Loading: A hangover from the original machines is the 360K disk format which means few companies bother to supply double-sided disks. This means large games require two or more disks with all the tedious disk swapping this entails.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: As RRP. Watch out for the twice yearly bundles.
Second Hand Availability: Very common and quite cheap. STs do not hold their value well – beware very old, single sided machines.
Maintenance: One year's guarantee. Return to dealer if faulty.

COMMODORE AMIGA



Models: Amiga A500; A2000, A3000
Package: A500 has keyboard and built-in drive with separate PSU; A2000 has separate keyboard with built-in (fan assisted) PSU. Recently released A3000 is a very powerful machine indeed.
Memory: A500 512K; A2000 1M; A3000
Processor: 500/2000 Motorola 68000 A3000 68030 16 or 25Mhz
Recommended Retail Price: A500 £NA; A2000 £1236.25; Batman Pack £399.99; Flight of Fantasy Pack £399.99; Class Of The 90's pack £579.99; A3000 from £2659
Contact: 0628 878888

IN BRIEF

A stunning specification with custom chips to rival almost everything around, the Amiga is the first choice for the most exigent of games players and video professionals. After an initially shaky start the machine continues to sell extremely well and has overtaken the ST in the UK, though the latter machine still has a slightly larger installed base. The A3000 is a top-end workstation substitute; includes Workbench 2, featuring enhanced icons, file handling, and security features plus *Amiga Vision*, a multi-media programming tool. A3000 also comes in three configurations, ranging from a 16Mhz, 40Mbyte hard disk at £2659 to a 25/100 at £3610.

GRAPHICS

Resolution: From 320 x 200 to 640 x 400 (more possible in software)
Palette: 4096
Colours: 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64 or 4096
TV: With modulator.
Monitor Output: SCART + composite video in monochrome.
Monitor Supplied: No
Monitor Options: C1084 £349.99
Sprites: 16 in hardware + unlimited BOBS from soft/hardware.
Speed: Very fast with good software.

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Depends on monitor.
MIDI: No. Third party interfaces available.
Stereo Output: 2 phono connectors.
Performance: Among the best around. Custom hardware squeezes 9 octaves of 8 bit digital sound into the four channels.

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 3.5inch – 837K A3000: 40/100Mbyte hard disk formatted.
Disk Price: £1.20 – £2.00
Disk Performance: Noisy and sluggish. Third party software is available to improve matters.
Keyboard: 94 keys. 10 function keys and separate cursor cluster.
Joystick/Mouse: 2 button mouse supplied as standard.
Interfaces: Two Joystick/mouse; *stereo audio; external disk drive(s);* RS232 serial; Centronics parallel printer; SCART RGB/video; composite monochrome video; expansion bus (internal on A2000; 32-bit on A3000); clock/memory expansion on A500 only; internal PC expansion on A2000 and A3000.

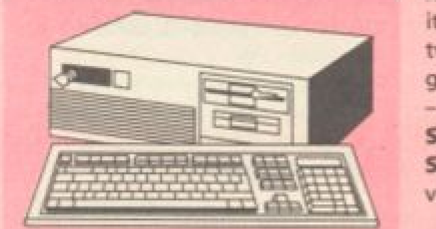
SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Similar to the ST.
Current Releases: Everyone's doing them.
Games: Something for everyone.
Graphics: Quality and range is unsurpassed.
Music: Needs better support for MIDI. Internal sound software is well supported thanks to IFF standards.
Prospects: Excellent.
Software Loading: Noisy but usually reliable. Plagued by viruses.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: Old Amiga 1000s can be picked up cheaply enough but these lacked the extra graphics modes of later models. Try to find a good value pack.
Second Hand Availability: Becoming common. Best buys are late Amiga 500s with Kickstart 1.2.
Maintenance: One years guarantee. Return faulty machines to dealers.

IBM PC



Model: IBM's PC was the first PC to be accepted in large quantities (not the first PC) and remains the standard by which all others are judged. There are hundreds of clones and variations including offerings from Amstrad, Atari and Commodore. In general, with PCs you pay for speed and better graphics standards. The extra money is worth it if you can afford it.
Package: Depends on the manufacturer although most are supplied with monitors. They can even be bought in kit form at no extra saving
Memory: Usually 512K or 640K. Can be anything from 64K to 1Mb+. Always go for a 640K model.
Processor: Intel 8088/8086 in base machine is sometimes replaces with the faster NEC V20/30. More expensive machines are based on Intel's much faster 286, 386SX, 386 and even the latest 486.
Recommended Retail Price: Can be picked up for as little as £299 for a "no frills" machine. With top-of-the-range 486 based clones – and the official IBM versions – the sky's the limit. Look for a good EGA or VGA model for between £750 and £1200.

IN BRIEF

Superb value if you want the ultimate all-rounder, the PC still betrays its business origins. Almost every major software house now port their titles to the PC but these remain limited by the constraints of the basic (most common) machines – which means they tend to be limited in sound and graphics. Definitely NOT first choice if entertainment is your preferred use for computers, or if you cannot afford the better EGA or VGA models (which are really essential for good games playing).

GRAPHICS

The first PCs weren't fitted with graphics as standard but most clones incorporate the necessary hardware and come with a monitor. There are three main standards: CGA – a nasty but all to common colour display, EGA about the lowest colour display worth considering, and Hercules monochrome. To get Amiga/ST graphics you must go for at least EGA or VGA which are usually only fitted as standard to more expensive machines (Amstrad's PC2086 is one exception).
Resolution: CGA 320 x 200; EGA 640 x 350; Hercules 720 x 384
Palette: CGA 8 (in two fixed sets); EGA 64
Colours: CGA 4; EGA 16; Hercules 2
Monitor Output: TTL RGB/RGBI (CGA); analogue RGB (EGA)
Monitor Options: Vast. Many monitors are dedicated to just one or two modes – some have amber, green or white monochrome displays – check before buying.
Sprites: None
Speed: From very slow – 8088 to very fast – 80486

SOUND

Speaker Quality: Anything poor from to downright diabolical.
MIDI: Third part interfaces available.
Stereo Output: No
Performance: Not the ideal machine for the musically bent – an Atari ST offers more for MIDI, the Amiga more for software sound purists.

HARDWARE

Disk Format: 5.25in –180/360K/ 1.2Mb; 3.5in 720K/1.44Mb
Disk Price: 60p – £3.00
Disk Performance: Average.

Most PC owners also buy hard disks. A large amount of PC applications software refuses to work unless you have a hard disk.

Keyboard: Almost as many variations as there are clones. Prefer the AT or extended AT layouts to the XT layout since it easier to use.

Joystick/Mouse: Neither supplied as standard. The better clones include a mouse or at least a mouse port, especially since IBM's WIMP system (Windows) has become more popular.

SOFTWARE

Existing Software Base: Vast!

Current Releases: All major software houses now produce something for the PC although few bother to support the better graphics modes so even if you have bought a VGA card, you may still have to play with dreadful CGA colours and resolution.

Games: Many of the latest games are now being converted – older titles will not.

Graphics: Given the right graphics adaptor, the PC has nice graphics and the software is usually excellent. On a standard CGA PC the graphics stink no matter how good the software is.

Music: Pathetic. Even the very best PCs can only manage a weak bleep.

Prospects: The PC is the eternal champion – as others fall by the wayside it carries on getting faster and better all the time. This is aided by Intel constantly improving the machine's processor and the vast user base demanding better equipment.

Software Loading: Fast and reliable; very fast from hard disk.

BUYLINES

Best Buy Price: Watch out for package deals form large chains and mail order companies. If you don't know too much about PCs go for a name you know.

Second Hand Availability: Common but be careful you do not get a clapped out monitor/keyboard.

Maintenance: Usually one year's guarantee – but competition has forced the price of maintenance contracts down to an affordable level. This often means they fix the machine in-situ for free.

HARDWARE UPGRADE

If you've got an 8-bit machine and want to upgrade, there's really never been a better time to do it than this Christmas. That's because for the first time for several years the hardware scene has really settled down. Current 16-bit technology is unlikely to change for at least five years. That's because although the leap from 8-bit to 16-bit architecture represents a quantum leap in power, the upgrade from 16-bit to 32-bit is nowhere near as dramatic in processing terms. 32-bit technology, however, would generate significantly higher construction costs, but without a really worthwhile increase in functionality.

For that reason, the ST, the Amiga, and the PC are probably here to stay for some considerable time, so you can choose between them (or the Archie and Apple) without worrying that your machine is suddenly going to become out of date.

Of course, there is one other consideration: consoles. Our view at ACE is very definitely this: consoles undoubtedly offer greater arcade gaming possibilities and the forthcoming CD-ROM units and smart cards should help iron out some of the data storage problems that make these machines unsuitable for data-hungry scenarios. However, the added functionality of a computer with keyboard and expansion options remains, in our opinion, essential to true state of the art gaming.

The inevitable conclusion is this: that you need a console AND a 16-bit computer! And when it comes to consoles, we only really have two strong recommendations at present, the Nintendo Gameboy (due for launch at the CES as you read this – be there!) and the Sega Megadrive (see our article recommending this unit and comparing the opposition in issue 36 of ACE).

To help you with the console choice, however, next month will see the ACE Hard Sell Console Section, with all the facts and figures you need about the various contenders. Don't miss it if you're planning a festive investment in one of these perky little hotboxes.

RAPID SERVICE SOFTWARE

SUPPLIERS OF QUALITY SOFTWARE

TITLE	AMIGA	IBM/PC	ST
Amos	37.50	-	-
Anarchy	-	-	14.99
Battle Of Britain (their finest Hour)	22.50	22.50	-
Brian Cloughs Football Fortunes	10.99	10.99	10.99
Champions of Krynn	22.50	22.50	-
Carrier Command	7.50	24.50	-
Centrefold Squares	13.99	13.99	13.99
Centurion	-	18.99	-
Colossus Chess X	17.50	17.50	17.50
Combo Racer	18.99	-	-
Curse of the Azure Bonds	TBA	22.50	-
Corruption	7.50	7.50	7.50
Damocles	17.50	-	17.50
Daily Double Horse Racing	13.99	13.99	13.99
Deluxe Strip Poker	13.99	13.99	13.99
Drivin Force	18.99	-	14.99
Dragons Breath	-	-	20.99
Dungeon Master	18.99	*22.50	18.99
Dynasty Wars	18.99	-	14.99
East v West	17.50	17.50	17.50
F16 Combat Pilot	17.50	17.50	17.50
F19 Stealth Fighter	TBA*	27.99	20.99
F29 Retaliator	18.99	-	18.99
Fimbos Quest	18.99	-	-
Flood	18.99	-	18.99
Gin/Cribbage King	20.99	20.99	-
Heroes	22.50	-	22.50
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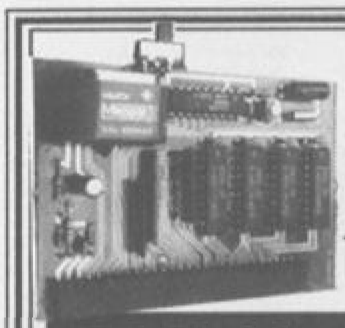

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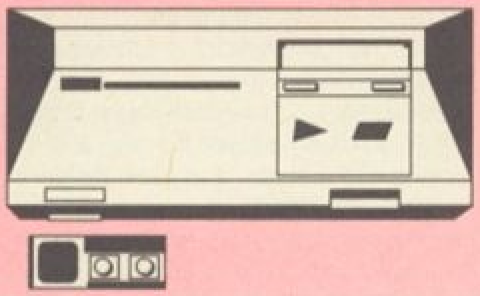
ACE times

A new all-Pink, all-Perky section – monthly columns for the users of the nine most popular machines, written from a personal viewpoint by other users...

SEGA MASTER



Although most of the media attention is currently being focused on the Megadrive, the flow of quality titles for the Master System is continuing unabated. In the next few weeks you can expect to see *World Soccer* (a very similar game to Sega's *World Cup Soccer* arcade machine with a huge number of available moves and superb playability), *Alex Kidd in Shinobi World* (a great fun platform game crossover with the violent ninja beat 'em up that works much better in practice than you would think) and *Super Monaco GP* (a dual screen head to head racing game - like the old C64 game *Pitstop II* - which is brilliant, as is nearly always the way with decently programmed two player games).

Also due for release soon are *Ultima IV* (the Master System version of the well known fantasy RPG - regular readers of ACE will have a pretty good idea what it looks like!) and *Aerial Assault* (a shoot 'em up, as you probably guessed). Headed for a Christmas release are the Master System versions of *ESWAT*, the shoot 'em up with knobs on, and a novel puzzle game called *Columns*. More news on these latter two games and other releases in the near future.

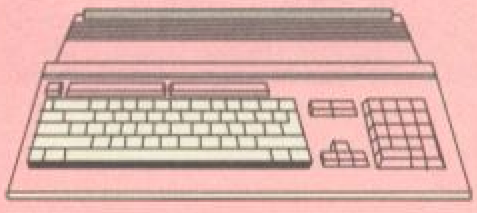
As I mentioned earlier, most of the Sega news at the moment is being hogged by the Master System's big brother, the Megadrive. Like the Master System, it's a wonderful machine, and there are no doubt several Master owners who are thinking of upgrading. Once again, the old "Will my old software run on my new machine?" question rears its ugly head. Fair enough, it's a legitimate gripe - there's nothing worse than spending literally hundreds of pounds on software, than to have to bundle it at a loss with your old machine when you sell it.

And it's not just the money, is it? It's a shame to wave goodbye to games that you still enjoy playing. (You miss 'em when they're gone, don't you?) Well, I'm pleased to tell you that Sega have designed a marvellous little widget called the 'Powerbase Converter' that slots into the Megadrive and allows you to run all Master System software. It's due to be released along with the Megadrive at the Computer Enter-tainment Show in September. And how much can you expect to pay for this marvel of modern microelectronics? A mere £29.99, no more than the price of a typical cartridge!

I hope this column will grow into required reading for all Master users. However, to aspire to these heights we need to know what YOU want to see covered. If you have any ideas, write - all serious suggestions will be considered!

● **Alex Simmonds**

AMIGA



Hello, and welcome to the new column devoted solely to all you wise Amiga owners out there. Now must be the best time to own an Amiga, and the future looks even better. Sales of the Amiga are outstripping those of the ST, the software is finally starting to fully utilise the hardware and the days of straight ST ports must be numbered. Whatever the developments, you'll be able to read about them here if they're not covered in the News pages.

The biggest news at the moment is (surprise, surprise) the CD-TV. Many Amiga owners will no doubt be asking "How will the machine affect me?". The answer has to be for the better. The CD-TV is, as you no doubt know, basically an Amiga and CD-ROM drive unit in one VCR-like box. Unfortunately, it's not compatible with the CD-I standard being championed by Philips and Sony (although if Commodore can beat the CD-I machines to the shelves, the difference may be to the regret of the Japanese rather than the Americans). If the unit does nothing else, it will raise public awareness of what the Amiga can do and, if a success will mean Amiga technology reaching other and wider markets. This will, in turn, ensure a longer and stronger lifetime for our machine.

There are two really important add-ons promised for the CDTV. The first is a full motion video adaptor (no date announced) and the second is the little CD-ROM widget that will enable us existing Amiga owners to upgrade to full CDTV compatibility.

Unfortunately, the latter box of tricks may not be as quick in appearing as first thought. Delays with CDTV as a whole mean that the system will not be available in quantity until after Christmas. More ominously, there is NO fixed release date at all for the Amiga upgrade package. And that could well mean 1992.

When it does arrive, it'll revolutionise the way you view software. Games will not only get bigger, they'll also get more realistic. That's because the unit has full CD-audio under computer control and can simultaneously overlay Amiga generated sound. Sound quality of this calibre has been shown to have a 'knock on' effect, making game graphics appear more realistic. Let's just hope Amiga owners can get in on the act sooner rather than later and that Commodore pull their fingers out.

SCREEN GEMS

Commodore have also announced that, following the success of the Batman and Flights of Fantasy bundles, there'll be a new pack for Christmas called 'Screen Gems'. It should include the film tie-ins Days of Thunder, Back to the Future 2 and Nightbreed, plus one original game, Shadow of the Beast 2. As usual, Deluxepaint 2 will also be bundled. It's a good package, and should do well.

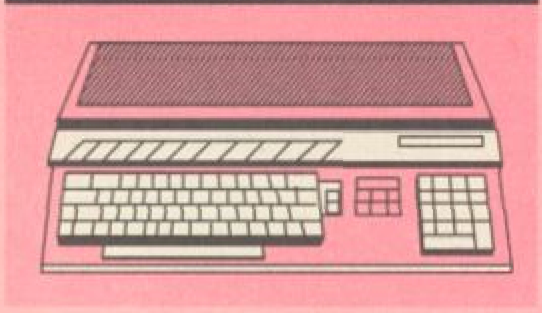
I've recently been looking at the new release by Cinemaware, Wings. The player takes on the role of a First World War pilot, fresh from flight school. At the beginning you must allocate a pool of skill points between four attributes that affect the game, such as flying ability and stamina. You can then enrol in a squadron and take part in a variety of flying activities. There are a host of different missions to take part in, such as strafings and bombings. The most attractive missions visually (and, I think, the most fun to play) are the aerial combat ones, where you engage enemy biplanes and triplanes over the countryside of France. This is depicted in impressive 3D solid vector graphics, mixed with bitmapped cockpit details (the view is from behind you head, and you can watch yourself looking about for enemy 'planes). This is topped with Cinemaware's typically over the top but very excellent presentation. I've only had a brief play with it, but initial impressions are great. Expect to see a full review in the 'Screentest' section next issue!

This column is written for you, the discerning Amiga owner. If you have any suggestions about how it should develop, just write to ACE. I'm always open to new ideas.

That's all for this month. As Big Arny says "I'll be back!"

● **Sam Vickers**

ATARI ST



According to Atari's company president, Sam Tramiel (son of Jack - the man who made Atari what it is today), there are plans afoot for a combined ST and CD drive, with a likely release date of early next year, although nothing has been confirmed. This is seen largely as a move by Atari to rain on Commodore's CD-TV parade.

So, will it? The CD-I machines have been revving up for some time now, generating a lot of frustrated interest due to the lack of actual consumer products available. The market is thus awaiting a working product at a reasonable price with a halfway decent software base.

One thing we can be reasonably certain of. Either the Atari machine will be a flop, or else it will offer a good deal more than simply an ST with a CD-ROM. Unless you have at the very least computer controlled multi-tasking CD-audio capability as well (as in the Commodore CD-TV), CD-ROM will not, in 1991, be able to offer sufficient incentive to software houses, who will be offered CD mass storage and extra functionality by both CDTV and CD-I. So don't just give us CD-ROM, Mr Tramiel.

On to software. Those with an artistic bent (ooh er, madam, don't start me off) will have looked with envious eyes at the Amiga paint package Deluxe Paint. Well, drool no longer STers, because Electronic Arts have announced Deluxe Paint ST. Look out for it in late September at the special introductory price of £49.99, rising by a further tenner after December 1.

The games continue to improve on the ST, particularly scrolling shoot 'em ups. One game I liked recently was Venus - The Fly Trap by Gremlin Graphics - it has superb smoothly scrolling graphics, excellent animation and sound, and a tough game challenge. The STE version is virtually indistinguishable from the Amiga version. Fair enough, it's not the most original game in the world, but it has bags of playability and polish - well worth a look, I'd say.

Another goody is Midnight Resistance from Ocean. Again graphics and sound are pretty good, but be warned - the game's tough! In the arcade the joystick had a rotating top so that you could actually rotate your gun by 360 degrees. This has been reproduced by holding down the fire button and moving the stick, which takes a little while to master but doesn't seriously affect playability. Unfortunately the two player option of the arcade game is not available, but never mind.

Thanks to the US Gold people, I was able to have a sneak preview of UN Squadron and Strider II. UN Squadron is a conversion of the arcade hit. The intro screens are nearly identical to the original, and there is some neat parallax scrolling in the game itself. Movement of the 'planes and other vehicles seemed a little jerky, but most of the features of the coin-op appeared to be there. Look forward to full reviews of the final versions when they appear.

Personally, I'm more interested in the Strider sequel, as I really enjoyed the original in the arcades and at home. The game design for Strider II is by Tiertex, who carried out the original conversion and, in a interesting reversal of the usual arcade to home conversion route, will be used by Capcom themselves as the basis for the actual arcade game. Apparently, this is the first time this has happened! The ST version is currently looking pretty good, although it admittedly doesn't look a hell of a lot different to the first. The plot involves Strider repelling an alien attack, but that's just the excuse for more jumping and slashing fun. If you liked the original, then it's probable you'll enjoy this sequel.

Actually, all this talk of Strider reminds me of a tip to help the less athletic see the later levels. Simply press F9 to pause the game, then hold down the HELP key, the LEFT SHIFT key and the 1 key. Release the keys and unpause the game with F10. Pressing keys 1-5 will take you to the relevant levels. Then pressing keys 1-4 will take you to various points in the selected level. (By the way, if you have any Atari ST/E game tips, please send them in!)

If there's anything in particular you'd like to see covered in this column then please write to me (James Cogan) care of ACE. See you next month!

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IBM PC

It's not been a good summer all round for the British software publishing business, but to be honest the closure of Grandslam and Tynesoft weren't really that much of a blow to MS-Dos users, as neither firm was exactly noted for either the quantity (or indeed the quality) of its PC product.

However, the latest shock announcement, that Activision is to all-but close its European operation by Christmas, is a far greater body-blow.

Once again, Activision UK wasn't exactly renowned for producing ground-breaking, machine-stretching games. In fact, its home-produced output – mainly unstimulating attempts at converting unconvertable arcade games – wasn't exactly the type of stuff you'd load up to convince a cynical neighbour that PC gaming was a worthwhile experience.

However, Activision UK did perform at least one very useful function – it brought a good deal of top-notch Dynamix and Sierra product to these shores, that otherwise would have been as hard to get at as Zsa Zsa Gabor's original birth cert. Worse still, both of these companies have only just announced truly strong product line-ups that are good enough to impress even a jaded hack like me who thought that he'd just about seen everything that could be done by games of this type.

But maybe it's not all bad news. Rumours had already been flying about Sierra setting up its own UK operation before Activision handed in its notice, and maybe this development will serve to speed up this process – which can only be a good thing for anyone who's really interested in the state of the art.

Otherwise on the software front things have been remarkably quiet of late, with only a couple of companies even bothering to get their disks onto the shelves before this month's Computer Entertainment Show in Earl's Court.

Of those games that have managed to make it from the production line to the rat race, MicroProse's Silent Service II and Flight Of The Intruder from Spectrum Holobyte are the only two that would be impressive enough to stand out in, say, a Christmas release schedule.

The first is obviously a sequel to the long-serving submarine simulator, but it's had a good deal more done to it than a simple manual rewrite and the addition of a couple of letters to the name – check it out whether you've got the first one or not.

Flight Of The Intruder is a simulator with bells on – or should that read a simulator with b... oh, never mind. Based on a novel (and a film that's soon to be busting blocks all over the country), it takes you back to the late '60s for a deadly behind-the-lines mission in America's playground of the time, Vietnam. The usual Holobyte quality is combined with some gripping missions which tends to focus the technical aspect in a way that few flight simulators have ever achieved.

One other release which deserves an honourable mention is Mindscape's 4D boxing (the fourth dimension is apparently realism!) which has two pugilists, who look as though they've stepped straight out of Dire Straits' Money For Nothing video, slugging it out in front of a digitised crowd who are presumably crying out for digitised blood (all of this detail depending on the capabilities of your particular configuration of course).

Other than that it's business as usual, apart from an unusual flood of Tetris derived puzzle games – not all of which achieve the definite Russian masterpiece's standard of compulsion. Domark's (or should I say Tengen's) effort, Klax, however does stand out, and is an essential purchase for fans of falling blocks and cerebral dexterity.

But so much for software. The one thing I saw that impressed me most in the last month was hidden away in a small unit in an industrial estate in Bristol. This unlikely location is the home of RC Simulations, whose owner, Bob Sidgwick, is one of those rare and lucky individuals who actually loves his job. And who wouldn't, when that job involves teaching computers to respond to your own voice!

Yes, you read that right. Bob's company is developing a system whereby he can run his favourite programs (in this case flight simulators) by means of an ingenious mix of readily available hardware and remarkable user-friendly software. In fact, not only has Bob got the machine listening to him – it's even talking back!

But I digress (and I'm also running out of space). Tune in again next month and I'll give you the full low-down on RC Simulations' developments, and also some details on how to get your own hands-on experience.

● **Ciaran Brennan**

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MEGADRIVE

Welcome to the future of home entertainment! The Sega Megadrive has to be the most exciting home entertainment product available at the moment, and the wise people of ACE have decided that this fact should be reflected in a monthly column devoted to it - and here it is! This is the one to read for all that's hot 'n' happening on the Mega scene, so make sure you don't miss it!

Probably the biggest news on the Megadrive scene at the moment is that Virgin Mastertronic will be officially launching the machine at the Computer Entertainment Show in September.

With its high quality specifications at the very reasonable price of £189.99 and the marketing muscle of Virgin Mastertronic behind it, the Megadrive should do well, particularly since comparable competition from the PC Engines and Nintendo Super Famicoms of this world is non-existent. This can only be a good thing for those of us who already own one of these excellent consoles because it will mean cheaper cartridges and peripherals.

BUT ... not everything is rosy in the Megadrive owner's garden. You, like me, probably own one of the 'grey' imported Megadrives; consoles intended to for the Japanese and US markets modified by third parties to run on the UK power and PAL TV systems. And you, like me, will no doubt be worried about how compatible 'official' Megadrive goodies will be with the imports.

In the quest for an answer, I contacted Virgin Mastertronic who sadly informed me that the UK consoles will indeed NOT be compatible. In fact, the UK game cartridges won't even be able to fit into an import's game slot!

In my opinion, this is a sad and, to some extent, foolish thing to do, because such a move alienates a large ready-made market who were surely instrumental in encouraging the company to take the plunge with a UK release. However, it's unlikely that we 'older' owners will get left out in the cold, although we may get left further out of pocket, since third party hardware manufacturers are likely to be beavering away at converters right now.

On a lighter note, I've been finding out which games are currently hot on the shelves in Japan. The conversion of Strider looks very good, far superior to the recent US Gold effort. The conversion of Atomic Robo-Kid is also looking very exciting. And good ol' Populous has come out too, and is apparently going down a storm. At last, a British success in Japan! By the way, keep an eye out for the Megadrive version of Super Monaco Grand Prix - it's fantastic!

Two games I'm particularly looking forward to seeing are Axis and Phelios. In the former, the player controls a giant 'Battletech'-like robot who must negotiate an isometric forced 3D landscape, while being attacked by all manner of tanks, chopper and 'planes. Looks like a hell of a lot of fun!

In Phelios, which appears to be based on Greek legend, you control a warrior on the back of a Pegasus-like flying horse who must battle his way through umpteen graphically gorgeous forced scroll levels. Yes, so it's ANOTHER shoot 'em up, but it does look good!

An interesting development on the Japanese Megadrive front is the new CD-ROM add-on. It was due to be released in late November over there for a mere 40000 Yen, which translates to just under £200! Of course, as is usual with products from Japan, the price will probably be substantially higher when it finally reaches our shores. (What shores? A pint of lager, please.) Unfortunately, problems have meant that release has been set back to Spring next year. Boy, if you thought the games were hot now, just wait until you see the sort of thing that will be possible with CD-ROM!

TALKING JAPANESE

I've been skimming through the Japanese console magazines, which really are a totally different kettle of fish to the UK mags! For a start they're a lot fatter, with densely packed features crammed with text and screen-shots. The sexual politics are a little dubious in places, though. For example, in one there was a section on playing tips for an arcade shoot 'em up. Fair enough, so what? Nothing, except the on-screen aerial manoeuvres were illustrated by photos of a nubile young Japanese girl in a swimming pool! Naturally, your trusty reporter made his excuses and turned the page.

In my opinion, the Megadrive will be the machine to have in the years to come,whether your talking about consoles OR computers. There are going to be exciting things happening in the months to come, so if you want to read about them you know where to come. And if you've got any suggestions as to what you'd like covered, drop us a line!

Anyway, until next time Megafans, hang loose! And don't forget to drop me a line if you've got something you'd like me to cover in the column.

● **David Upchurch**

GAMEBOY

Yo dudes! We've just received a copy of *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* on the Gameboy and it's rad. This Konami action beat'em-up lets you play the four most street-cred turtles in the world.

April, ace reporter, has been kidnapped by Shredder and his gang of mutant morons, Bebop and Rocksteady. So it's time for the turtles to take out the thugs. Playing Leonardo, Donatello, Raphael and Michaelangelo gives you the chance to use a sword, bo-stick, sais and nunchuks over 15 levels of fighting fun. Each turtle has eight hit points, a range of nifty ninja mutant moves and an unlimited supply of shuriken throwing stars. You can regain your strength by picking-up pizza slices and pies. When all your hit points are lost, you're captured by the Foot Clan and thrown in jail with April. It's then up to the next ninja turtle to rescue his friends.

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles on the Gameboy features sewers, piranha-infested rivers and freeways filled with fast cars. Totally turtle, man. Initial impressions are good. The sprites are detailed and capture the essence of the cartoon series. Even the turtle theme tune has been converted to Gameboy stereo sound. Read the radical ACE review next month. Cowabunga!

DEFEATING DOUBLE DRAGON

Double Dragon is the best beat'em-up on the Gameboy to date. Here are some tips for the first three missions, discovered while playing the game for Console Screentest (see page 86)...

MISSION ONE: Nothing to worry about here, grab the baseball bat and pummel the punks. But I was sad to see the demise of the headbutt. Abobo, the end of level boss, is the hardest sucker to slug-out. Never try to take him head-on. Approach at an angle, then let him have it with a series of fast punches. If you don't, he'll just grab you with one hand and rearrange your face with the other.

MISSION TWO: Jump from the very edge of the moving platforms to clear the warehouse. One of the whip girlies is really thick on the final stage of Mission Two: she just jumps off the bottom of the screen. The end of mission boss flies around the screen like a fast forward kung-fu film-star. Keep close and keep kicking. This should end his movie motions.

MISSION THREE: The previous boss sprites of missions one and two return to reek their revenge – stay cool and use the same tactics as before.

MORE FROM KONAMI

Konami is releasing five new Gameboy titles this autumn: *Teenage Mutant Ninja Titles, Lone Ranger, NFL Football, Bill Elliot's NASCAR Racing and Blades of Steel. The Lone Ranger* is a Western shoot'em-up featuring the cult cowboy, Tonto and a horse called (Hi-Ho) Silver. *Bill Elliot's NASCAR Racing* is the second Gameboy race-game based around the great American sport of stock-car racing. Mindscape's *Days of Thunder* is the other (see ACE 36). If you're interested in NASCAR'ing, you can watch the real thing at 4:00am in some ITV television regions or Cruise Like Thunder with Tom Cruise in the popular teen-movie, *Days of Thunder. Blades of Steel* is a hockey game.

Konami is also releasing *Skate or Die: Bad 'N Rad* on the Gameboy. Based around the famous Electronic Arts C64 game, the Gameboy version is more a seven-stage scrolling skateboarder arcade game than a straight skateboard-sim. It features Bionic Lester, Mister Wart Monger, python heads and a Berserk Not-so-Happy Clown.

SEEING THE LIGHT

"You can't stay in the dark forever." Vic Tokai has an interesting peripheral for all you Gameboy owners suffering from insomnia.

"Lightboy is a unique accessory designed to be used with Gameboy. It is a lightweight, compact instrument which unfolds to fit directly onto the Gameboy, allowing you to view the screen with light through a magnifying glass."

"Lightboy, there's no better way to see the light." Contact: VIC Tokai, 22904 Lockness Ave., Torrance, California 90501, USA. Don't forget to tell them ACE sent you.

HEIANKYO ALIEN LANDS

Apparently this baby is selling well in the shops. "One thousand years ago, an army of malicious aliens invaded the peaceful city of Kyoto, forcing the villagers into an endless battle with the unwelcomed visitors."

Originally a video game that took Japan by storm ten years ago, *Heiankyo Alien* has been specially adapted to the Gameboy. "It features the Multi Matrix Sound System (MMSS) – the latest advancement in audio high technology."

Heiankyo Alien also features a simultaneous two-player option. It's released by Meldac.

Don't forget – if you've got something to contribute to the Gameboy column, pen me NOW!

● Rik Haynes

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C64/128

The recent console boom has seen the market flooded with machines solely dedicated to bringing the public games, games and more games. Not to be outdone by the Big Bad Boys of the Console such as Nintendo and Sega, Commodore have launched themselves into the foray with their own attempt at a dedicated machine. That feature however, is on another page. So here instead, are a few hints and hacks for your C-64. A few newies, and others that might entice the dust from some of those older titles...

First off the mark, part of the solution to ***TUSKER*** from System 3. The first load signed, sealed and delivered.

1. Collect all the necessary items from the desert screens.
   These comprise: the GUN; the AMMUNITION ; the KNIFE ; the ACID ; the WATER BOTTLE.
2. Enter the cave mouth and walk through the first lead-off cave.
   Open the chest inside this second cave and take the book.
3. Enter the water, and, using the knife, kill the alligator.
4. Enter the cave beyond the water, collect the nuggets and machete and exit the cave section.
5. Using the machete, hack away the bushes from the the jungle to create an opening. Walk right through the jungle avoiding all enemies.
6. Arriving at the final screen, use the acid to release the giant slug from its chains and be sure to avoid it when it begins to move - it cannot be killed.
7. Exit the screen via the top right-hand corner......

Extra hing: If caught in a whirlwind on the desert screens, wiggling the joystick rapidly left/right enables you to escape before losing too much energy.

FORGOTTEN WORLDS

To prevent enemies from blasting you to kingdom come, start up the game as a two player option and play the second player as normal. When player one dies, all enemy attentions will be directed towards where the sprite was, enabling you to sail through the levels with nary a scratch.

SALAMANDER

This tip requires an autofire joystick. Play as normal until your last life. As soon as you are killed, switch autofire ON to continue playing.

ACE II

Gain invincibility simply by entering the name DUSTY BUG in the high-score table.

THRUST

When the game has loaded, hold down the SPACE and RUN/STOP keys simultaneously, which should cause the high-score table to do strange things. Begin the game with extra lives and a HUGE score.

MYTH

When loading the game, ensure the SHIFT LOCK key is depressed. You should then find that the game begins on level two although you won't have the sword. Collect the firebolts from the harpies and fight your way through to level three. Deliberately lose ALL your lives. The next section will load and you'll be reincarnated with the sword.

GHOULS 'N' GHOSTS

Try typing 'WIGAN RLFC' on the high score table....

LAST NINJA II

A listing to bestow unlimited Ninjas on all but the final confrontation.

```
 5 PRINT CHR$(147)
10 FOR I=304 TO 431: READ A$
20 L=ASC(LEFT$(A$,1)): L=L-55: IF
L<55 THEN L=L+7
30 R=ASC(RIGHT$(A$,1)): R=R-55: IF
R<55 R=R+7
40 V=(L*16)+R: C=C+V: POKEI, V:
NEXT
50 IF C<>14491 THEN PRINT "DATA
ERROR...": END
60 PRINT "SAVE LISTING FOR FUTURE
USE"
70 PRINT:PRINT "SYS 373 TO START"
100 DATA A9,AD,8D,50,92,A9,3C,8D,
5E,17
110 DATA A9,03,8D,5F,17,A2,24,BD,
4F,01
120 DATA 9D,3C,03,CA,10,F7,A2,12,
4C,F3
130 DATA 3F,A5,EC,29,0F,AA,BD,54,
03,8D
140 DATA 50,03,8D,5A,03,8D,51,03,
A9,AD
150 DATA 8D,FF,FF,4C,F3,3F,50,52,
6C,99
160 DATA B8,0F,92,8F,7C,8A,88,90,
00,20
170 DATA 2C,F7,38,A9,AB,8D,B1,03,
A9,8A
180 DATA 8D,B2,03,A9,69,8D,B3,03,
20,6C
190 DATA F5,A9,99,8D,40,F2,A9,01,
8D,41
200 DATA F2,20,BF,03,60,A9,BF,8D,
B2,03
210 DATA
A9,03,8D,B3,03,A9,30,8D,09,14
220 DATA
A9,01,8D,0A,14,4C,64,F1,FF,FF
```

Now, get your pens out. I'd like anyone with anything to say or contribute, (specific games tips, requests for featured items such as golden oldie re-reviews etc) to write to the C-64 Machine Specific column via the usual ACE address...More next month.

● **Simon Belvedere**

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AMSTRAD CPC

It's all very well to trumpet the arrival of the new CPC machines and the GX4000 console, but have a nasty feeling that interest in the latter may well make the old CPC's AND the new CPC+ range slightly redundant as far as games software is concerned. A check with software houses about their support for the console reveale the following....

US GOLD

Geoff Brown, Managing Director of US Gold, said, "We will initially support the GX4000 with two games. *Epyx Worlds of Sport* is a compilation of events from the Californian companies popular sports-sims: *Summer Games, Winter Games, World Games* and *Californian Games. Strider II* is a follow-up to the highly successful Capcom coin-op conversion from last year. "I want Amstrad to be successful because it's a British company," confided Brown. "We're looking at consoles as additional sourtes of revenue, US Gold will continue to support our current range of computers. We can't release as many games on the GX4000 as the C64 console because we have to develop the Amstrad games from scratch – to take into account the special graphics and sound features of the machine."

MIRRORSOFT

"We will support the GX4000 wherever possible," said Peter Bilotta, Mirrorsoft's Managing Director. "We want to make sure we produce the right type of game for each machine." Mirrorsoft games on the GX4000 are likely in the first quarter of 1991. Bilotta concluded, "We want the micro and console to live happily together, with Mirrorsoft successfully participating in both markets."

OCEAN

Unfortunately, no-one from Ocean was available for comment as we went to press. But this leading Manchester-based software company is firmly backing the GX4000 with *Robocop II, Batman – The Movie, Plotting, Operation Thunderbolt, Chase HQ and Shadow Warriors*. Ocean even wrote *Burning Rubber*, the game supplied with the GX4000.

MINDSCAPE

"We've nothing planned at present," said Geoff Heath, Managing Director of Mindscape in the UK. Phil Harrison, Software Development Manager at Mindscape, told me, "There's talk of *Chessmaster* being converted over to the GX4000. But we won't be able to if Nintendo decides to launch the Gameboy and NES versions of the game in Europe". He added, "I don't really think much of the new Amstrad machines. They won't sell at all in Japan and USA, and they will only do moderately well in certain parts of Europe like France, Spain and the UK."

MICROPROSE

"We haven't made any commitments as yet, but we should have some GX4000 products early next year," said Peter Jones of Microprose. "We're looking at arcade style games. *Stunt Car Racer* and *Rick Dangerous* would be ideal console games." He added, "Many Microprose games don't suit consoles because of their strategy elements. Don't forget, we're also going down our own road with the *F-15 Strike Eagle II* arcade machine".

PSYGNOSIS

Jonathan Ellis, joint Managing Director of Psygnosis, told us, "*Shadow of the Beast* is being converted under license by Gremlin". Other titles are likely to follow.

ELECTRONIC ARTS

This Californian company is unsure about the GX4000 because it thinks the Amstrad machine is too European. EA is talking to other companies interested in licensing its games on the Amstrad console.

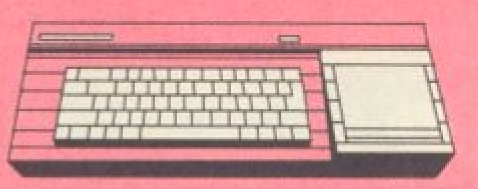
DOMARK

Mark Strachan, joint Managing Director of Domark, said, "We will be producing five titles on the GX4000 before Christmas, including *Klax, Escape from the Planet of the Robot Monsters* and *The Spy Who Loved Me*."

So will software companies really continue to support the standard CPC? What do you think? Write to: **CPC Pink Page, ACE Magazine, EMAP Images, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU**. Also, contact us if you have something to ask or say about anything connected with the CPC. Pokes for games, hardware questions, playing tips – you name it, we'll consider it for publication. We're also looking for a regular writer for this column. Interested?

● **Rik Haynes**

SPECTRUM



Anyone who has failed to notice the impending CES show should begin to take serious notice right here. Amongst all the usual hype and additional media attention, this year sees the launch of product that may have rather more than the usual promised impact on the home computer market; not least of all those little boxes emblazoned with the Sinclair logo.

With the taste for increasingly powerful game-specific hardware on the rise, the future for some of the less up-to-date machines must surely be looking less than favourable. Although Amstrad are a major force in marketing, can they compete with the Japanese giants, and – even more important – have they, with the release of their own 8-bit console, in effect dug a grave for us Spectrum owners? After all, wasn't the Sinclair name meant originally to be reserved for the more 'gamesy' machines from Amstrad? Why doesn't the GX have a Sinclair name on it?

Amstrad are adamant that they are not 'abandoning' us Spectrum owners. Yes, a spokesman told me, they are looking to make a serious impact into the console market with the new GX4000, but they are by no means ignoring the Spectrum. In fact, Amstrad do not regard either their own or the opposition's consoles as any threat, due to the fact that the Spectrum is in "a different market area" and is still as important as ever due to its lower-price bracket. To stress this fact, Amstrad are preparing to launch a major T.V advertising campaign to re-promote the Spectrum, showing at least on the surface, the courage of conviction. Let's hope there's more behind this than simple bluster.

SOFTWARE SCENE

On the more positive side, the upcoming show is far from the albatross it could be and is evidence that both software and hardware producers alike feel that the Spectrum is a long way from sinking into the murky depths of extinction.

Most of the action on the Spectrum scene comes from the software-side of the industry and includes the launching of the inevitable mega-licences, the sale of which should help sustain any machine, be it 8-bit or otherwise. The title which looks set to become the only contender in terms of sales is of course (loathe as I am to mention it again) *Teenage Mutant Hero (NINJA) Turtles*.

The surprise is that the Spectrum version does look – for a license – pretty sexy. Converted across all formats, the game is looking equally as impressive on the Spectrum, as it does on 16-bit formats and, gameplay provided, should keep 8-bit critics at bay. Whatever you think about these green beasties, a good Spectrum version could give our format quite a boost over the counter during the Christmas season.

Other licences include the similarly blockbusting Total Recall, in which Arnie is once again converted into pixel-perfect form, (on this occasion to rampage through several levels of Martian destruction), and the unlikely Monty Python's Flying Circus, (so you too can learn how to identify different types of tree from quite a long way off).

Other, less hyped (but potentially equally as good) titles include the officially licensed Lotus Esprit from Gremlin, (sorry, no sign of Chase HQ II as yet), Time Machine from Vivid image, (an excellent arcade-adventure with huge elements of strategy thrown in), and what could be regarded as the best spectrum game around at the moment, the epic arcade adventure from Dinamic - Satan.

These, along with the many other titles scheduled for release on the 8-bit format, are far from indicative of its demise, despite the raging competition.

It is my personal feeling however, that the Spectrum is under little threat from the console boom, both superficially and saleswise. This is explainable, in that the user base for the Sinclair machines has been established over a far longer period of time, than that of the consoles, and that those people who have remained Spectrum owners (even having subsequently purchased an additional, more powerful machine), are unlikely to give up this long-time favourite for dead.

Add to this, the fact that console cartridges are rarely under twice the retail cost of a full-price Spectrum title and it is safe to assume that no matter how long or how hard the onslaught, Spectrums remain in a class of their own.

GIMME SKIN!

Well, maybe not skin, but certainly parchment. I want to build this Spectrum column into one that will truly reflect the face of Advanced Speccy Entertainment. That means news, analysis, crystal ball gazing – the lot. So write, now.

● **James Segals**

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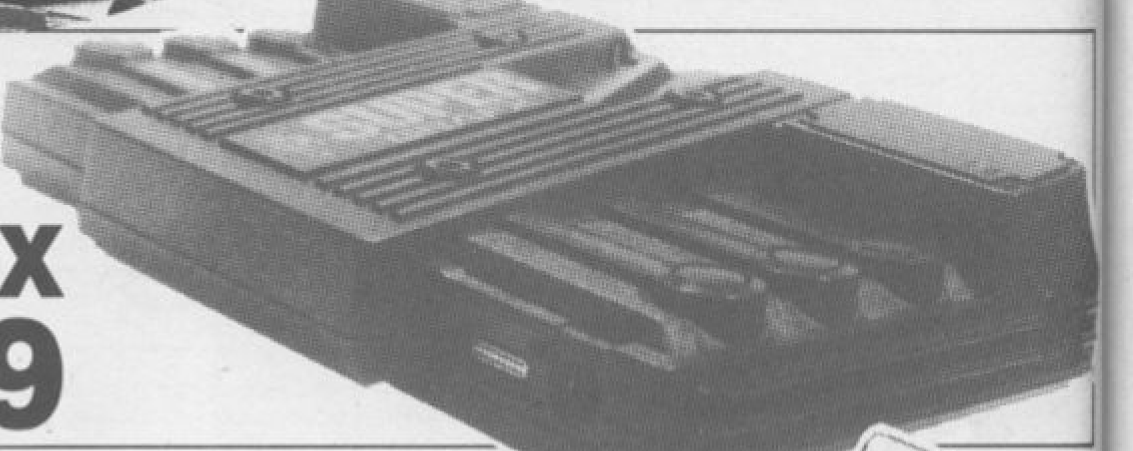

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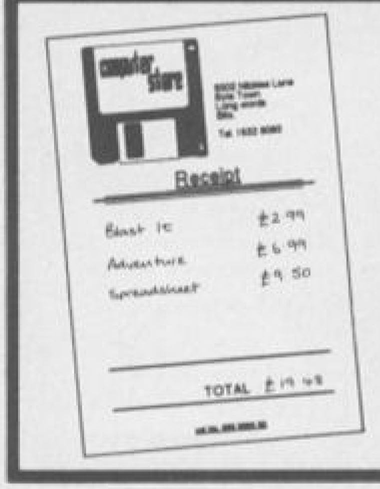

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STOCK MARKET

THIS MONTH'S SOFTWARE INDEX RATING:

74.75

SHOOTING UP FOR CHRISTMAS ALREADY!

Who's top dog this month? Plus yur chance to win free software in our regular monthly competition

We've given the Stock Market a good overhaul this month, with a new design and simpler presentation, since we realised that the wealth of information in the previous format was beginning to become overwhelming.

Here's what you get...

Having collated all the games reviewed in the latest issues of computer magazines, we've then calculated the average mark that each publisher received for every one of its games on each format. This is the rating that you see in the second column. So, for example, if the company is great at sourcing 16-bit games but botches up its 8-bit conversions, that will pull down the average mark, even if you can see one of its titles heading up the Amiga, ST or PC chart printed on page 165. If all the games are excellent, or if the company has just one brilliant program doing the rounds at the moment, it will consequently have a high rating.

The third column, labelled '+ or -', shows you how much the publishers' averages have improved (or deteriorated) compared to last month. A plus score here, and their games are getting better; a minus score means their games aren't doing as well as they were.

The last column – the Ranking column – tells you how well a software house's games are doing compared to everybody else's. Each month we calculate the average mark for all games on all formats that have been reviewed during the month. We call this figure the Software Index. Each company's Ranking shows how well their games compare to the average as expressed by the Software Index. For example, in this month's chart, Micro Style's current batch of releases are worth 9.38 percentage points above average - according to the industry's reviewers, anyway.

We print only the top 25 companies each month. In fact, we keep tabs on all of them, but you don't want to read through a list of over 100 names in every issue! Sometimes new companies come along – the asterisk by Core Design's name indicates that it is a brand new entry to the Stock Market company counter - and straight in at number one, too.

Finally, we take care that the information here is genuinely useful. To that end, we don't count companies which have only received a single solitary review. Too often these 'solus' reviews are unrepresentative of the sort of marks a game would get from other mags, and if a title is only reviewed once ever, it's often a difficult-to-get-hold-of import.

Publisher	Score	Change	Ranking
*Core Design	93.5	n/a	18.75
Delphine	93	n/a	18.25
Anco	86.5	-6.36	11.75
CDS	86.34	n/a	11.59
Micro Style	84.13	3.13	9.38
US Gold	84.08	13.28	9.33
Microprose	83.67	-9.98	8.92
UbiSoft	83.22	0.22	8.47
Hewson	82.9	-6.8	8.15
SSI/US Gold	82.75	5.42	8
Domark	82.52	3.24	7.77
Audiogenic	82.3	17.3	7.55
Novagen	81.5	-1.25	6.75
Code Masters	81.5	15.64	6.75
Rainbow Arts	81.48	-1.73	6.73
PSS/Mirrorsoft	81	n/a	6.25
Llamasoft	80.5	19.17	5.75
Sierra	80.46	6.25	5.71
Palace	80	0.6	5.25
Gremlin	79.85	0.5	5.1
Electronic Arts	79.32	0.63	4.57
Firebird	79	1	4.25
Ocean	78.34	5.07	3.59
Infogrames	78.23	-4.02	3.48
Hit Squad	78.23	11.79	3.48

THE PRIZES

All correct entries will be put into a draw and a random selection made to determine a winner for each of the seven categories. There's a free game worth up to £25.00 for your machine waiting for you if you win. Five correct entries in the Jackpot Category wins you £150 worth of software!.

WIN FREE SOFTWARE

Regular ACE readers will already know that we give away free software every month to those who can correctly predict the top entries in next month's charts (see page 165) and Stockmarket. However, we've made one important change to the entry conditions. Instead of filling in a form, we ask that readers submit their entries on postcards. Many readers already do this anyway but in case of difficulty, the panel below shows you the information you need to include. We've introduced this change for two reasons: so that you no longer need to tear up your copy of the magazine, and because the competition is now getting so popular that it takes us hours simply to open all the envelopes. So please be warned: entries in envelopes may be disqualified.

Round Nine winners are announced on page 124.

THE RULES

- All entries must be received by the closing date for this round of September 31st 1990.
- No employees of EMAP, or of any company involved in the production, distribution, or sale of ACE Magazine are eligible for entry.
- Only one entry per household. Proof of posting not held as proof of delivery.
- Winners names will be announced in issue 39 of ACE. Please allow 28 days for delivery of prizes after publication of that issue.
- We cannot undertake to deliver specific software titles as prizes, but rest assured that we will make every effort to ensure that the games get the adrenalin pumping!

ENTERING THE COMPETITION

STEP ONE

Enter you name and address, a daytime telephone number if you have one, and the Round Number.

STEP TWO

Tell us your age and which machine you own. Just in case you win!

STEP THREE

Examine this month's charts (see page 165). Then, using your knowledge of the games scene, try to predict which games will come top of the six machine specific charts. Finally, enter on your postcard:

- the top game for the Spectrum
- the top game for the C64
- the top game for the CPC's
- the top game for the IBM PC
- the top game for the Amiga
- the top game for the ST

YOU DON'T HAVE TO ENTER A SUGGESTION FOR EVERY MACHINE! But remember that your chances of winning may increase if you do.

STEP FOUR (OPTIONAL)

You can also try to predict which company will be at the top of next month's Stockmarket listing (see this page). Enter on the card: '**The top softco will be...**(name of company)'

STEP FIVE (OPTIONAL)

If you want to go for the jackpot £150 prize, then select any of the previous categories and try to predict the top FIVE entries for next month instead of just the top one. Then tell us which category you're predicting for – it can be either the Stockmarket or any of the machine categories in Step Three. REMEMBER - YOU CAN ONLY SUBMIT **ONE** JACKPOT CATEGORY!

STEP SIX

Post the card (WITH a stamp!) to us to arrive not later than the closing date for this round (31st September). The address is:

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Dozens have won prizes – perhaps you'll be lucky this time!

This is ROUND 11

Each month's competition has a round number so that we can correctly identiry entries. You MUST include the round number on your postcard otherwise your entry may not be processed correctly.

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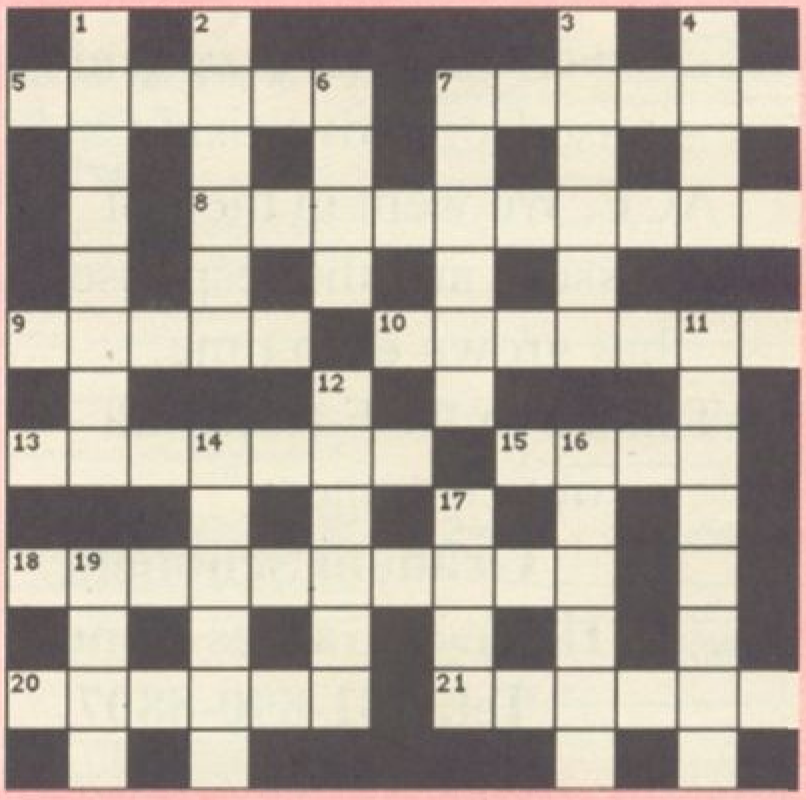
ACE +WORD

Our monthly prize word puzzler, set by the inimitable MIPS

Here's this month's teaser. And while we're on the subject of teasing, we apologise for the tease (in very bad taste – and actually quite unintentional) which resulted in the August issue's crossword having one of the squares accidentally blanked out. Clever clogs will have realised that 13 across should have had ten letters – not nine.

PUZZLE PRIZES

Until recently, we've been offering £25 cash prizes to winners of the ACE puzzle and crossword, but several people have been asking us for games instead. From now on all prizes will be in software, so please make sure you include your name, address, and machine format when you enter.



CLUES ACROSS

5 'Jet Force', a game from Firebird (6)
7 Game leading Israelites to the Promised Land? (6)
8 Software Project's crazy digger (5,5)
9 In Malta I, Tony, formed a software house (5)
10 Stops starers messing around (7)
13 Gives the latest news on new releases of old games (7)
15 Devil of a game from Dinamic (5)
18 Vivid Image game used to punch in nails (10)
20 Mom and Des get confused about signal changers (6)
21 Ravi Shankar novel about Activision game? (6)

CLUES DOWN

1 Chap gets involved with them in Linel game (3,5)
2 Software house's peak (6)
3 Sting's old force (6)
4 Nude dancing in Science Fiction (4)
6 He's from Bridlington, Yorkshire (4)
7 Call for more from software house (6)
11 Game in which you might go down the hatch (8)
12 Top ten tries playing game (6)
14 Marie's playing soldiers (6)
16 Cart uranium around for Gremlin game (6)
17 Storage device may skid around (4)
19 So Ma's upset by game-oriented language from Mandarin (4)

HOW TO ENTER

Every month we offer a free game worth up to £25 for your machine if you're the sender of the first correct crossword solution out of the hat. The address to send your solution to is:

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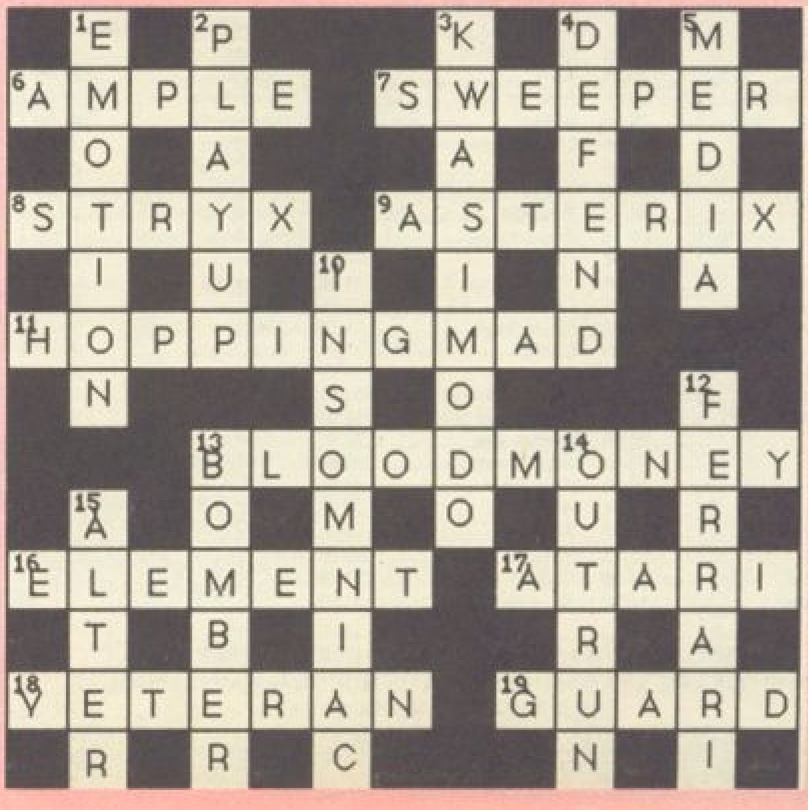
The deadline for entries is always the first Thursday of the month named on the cover. In this case, it's Thursday 4th October 1990.

SOLUTION TO AUGUST 90 CROSSWORD

And the winner was E.J. Brooksbank of Leicester, who receives a cheque for £25.



OOPS!

We haven't given you the crossword solutions to June and July – solutions and winners will be announced next month. And now that the new Pinks are here, we promise you we'll keep up to date!

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ACE PUZZLE

'SEVEN LUCKY SEVENS'

Our diagram shows an unusual sequence of numbers. Each of the numbers after the first is double the preceding number - but the curious thing is that each value contains one (and only one) seven. Those of you who are aware of the mystical properties of numbers will be surprised at such an occurence of such a sequence of seven numbers each containing just one digit '7'.

Now the values given here are NOT the smallest possible. There is one other set of numbers which have the same property.

Can you find the starting value of this sequence? Answer next month.

We'll also be printing the solution to the August 90 puzzle next month. The awful truth is that NO-ONE got close to the answer, but we were merciful and decided to give a prize to Mark Shaw of Preston, who got closer than anyone else!

21987
x2= 43974
x2= 87948
x2= 175896
x2= 351792
x2= 703584
x2= 1407168

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ACE OCT.

HOT OFF THE SHELF

It's Saturday morning. Life seems somewhat...well...somehow...er....not...um ...quite right. Could it possibly be that you need...er...breakfast? No...a drink? No!!...A new game?? Ahhhh... the relief! And to make things even easier, here's a list of stunning powerplays that could change your life.

ANTHEADS

Cinemaware/Mirrorsoft • Amiga £14.99dk

For all those who loved *It Came From The Desert* here is more of the same in the shape of a handy bolt-on scenario. It's fifties style Sci-Fi again, and this time some very strange things are happening to the inhabitants of the tiny Mid-West American town of Lizard's Breath. You play 'Brick' Nash, an ex-fighter pilot determined to solve the riddle of the Antheads. If you enjoy puzzle solving with great graphics and sound, then you can't go far wrong with this number, and if you haven't played *It Came From The Desert* then why not give that a try first?

★ ACE RATING 902

CAPTIVE

Mindscape • Atari ST/STE £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £29.99dk

Another in the ever expanding number of RPG's portrayed using first-person perspective. *Captive*, programmed by the veteran Tony Crowther pits you against hordes of rampaging aliens, with nothing but a briefcase at your disposal! This briefcase however, contains a computer giving you remote-control over a four-droid team, with which you must free yourself from the fortress where you are imprisoned. Excellent bitmapped graphics, atmospheric realtime stereo sound and a total of 65000 levels put *Captive* very much in the ACE rated bracket.

★ ACE RATING 930

CHAOS STRIKES BACK

FTL/Mirrorsoft • Atari ST £24.99 • Amiga TBA

The long awaited sequel to *Dungeon Master*. If you have already played through the first program you can use your existing characters, otherwise there is another hall of mirrors you can select from. *Chaos* has a similar feel to *Dungeon Master*, but is much tougher. There are also some new features thrown in, like a character editor and help oracle (very handy). If you haven't played *Dungeon Master* then play that first before making a definite date with this game.

★ ACE RATING 945

CONQUEROR

Rainbow Arts • Atari ST £19.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £24.99dk

An arcade style tank sim which makes use of a 3D graphics system based around the one David Braben developed for *Zarch*. There are three types of game available: arcade, attrition, and strategy. All three are best played with two joysticks *Battlezone* style, but there are enough control options to suit every set-up. A definite buy for tank buffs.

★ ACE RATING 925

CORPORATION

Core Design • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £29.99

This role-playing cybernetic extravaganza from CORE pushes the limits of previous RPG's just that bit further. *Corporation* is a 3-D exploration, puzzle-orientated arcade combat game in the traditional mould of *Dungeon Master*. Your objective is to find and remove an embryo belonging to the ultimate biogenetic killing machine, bred by the UCC Corp. Light-source shaded raphics and sound of film-like quality, along with excellent playability and an intuitive control method all contributed in pushing *Corporation* over the 900 mark.

★ ACE RATING 945

DAMOCLES

Novagen • Atari ST £24.95dk • Amiga £24.95dk • PC TBA

This unusual combination of flight sim and adventure game, and sequel to the well-received *Mercenary*, has been in development for a couple of years now, but the resulting game has been worth the wait. The wire-frame graphics of the original game have been replaced by solid 3D vector graphics, but they are just as fast. There are now nine planets to explore instead of one city, so there is plenty of long term challenge here.

★ ACE RATING 935

F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER

Microprose • Atari ST £29.99dk • Amiga £29.99dk • PC £39.99dk

A program that could well be described as the Flight Simulator's Flight Simulator. The PC version has enjoyed much success since its launca year ago, and now it's brothers on the ST and Amiga look set to do the same. The sim is based around the much talked about (or perhaps that be whispered about) Stealth Fighter. It boasts four huge sceanrios with hundreds of missions, and plenty of detail. If you are looking for the definitive flight sim, then you can't go far wrong with this one.

★ ACE RATING 935

FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER

Mirrorsoft/Spectrum Holobyte • Atari ST £??.?? • Amiga £??.?? • PC £??.??

From the people who brought you the superb *Falcon* comes yet another world beating flight simulation. It is based on the book of the same name by Steven Coonts and has you flying either an Intruder or a Phantom on bombing and reconaissance missions over vietnam. The simulator iery strong on features, including a superb (if a little unreali stic) auto-pilot option.

★ ACE RATING 910

FUTURE WARS

Palace • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC TBA

A totally mouse-driven graphic adventure from French developers Delphine. You are cast as a mild-mannered office window cleaner who gets caught up in an alien plot to conquer Earth in the 43rd century. The graphics and background music are very striking and the game is made very accessible by the lack of text entry. There is enough of a challenge here to keep most adventurers happy for some time. A delightful game.

★ ACE RATING 910

GRAVITY

Imageworks • Atari ST £24.95dk • Amiga £24.95dk • PC TBA

Deep space strategy unlike anything you've ever seen before. The universe is being invaded by the alien outies who are attempting to turn all the suns in the universe into black holes. Meanwhile you must create as many inhabitable systems as possible. The game makes use of the principle of Einstein-Minkowski fourspace – this makes for some very unusual graphics. When you add

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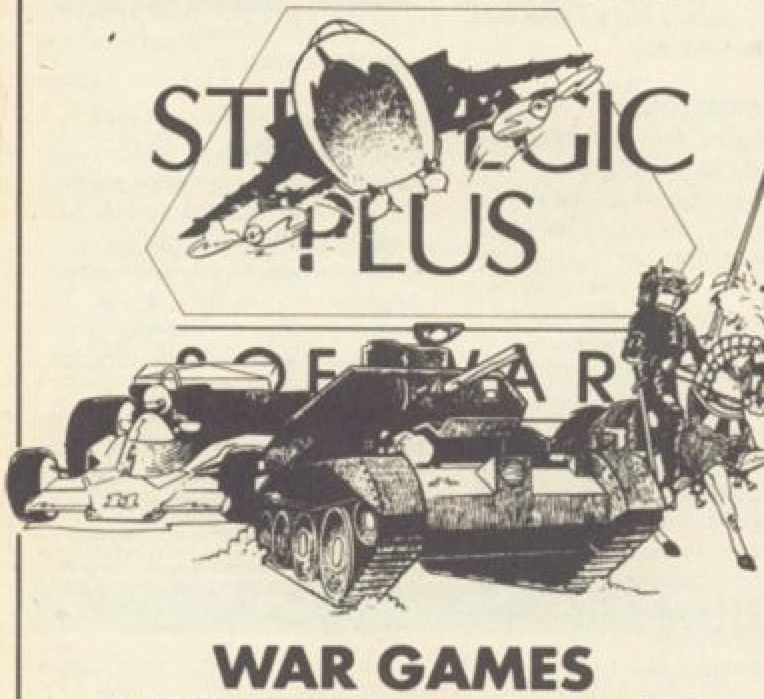

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★ ACE RATING 930

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Domark • Atari ST £19.99dk • Amiga £19.99dk • Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk • Amstrad £9.99cs £14.99dk • C64 £9.99cs £12.99dk • PC £24.99dk • Archimedes £30.00dk
A very competent conversion of the Tengen coin-op. Drive your Ferrari round either a speed track or a stunt track complete with a loop and open bridge to leap. The coin-op scored on its super fast solid vector graphics, and these have been faithfully reproduced in the computer versions. A must buy.
★ ACE RATING 937

HARPOON

Mirrorsoft/PSS • PC £29.99dk
Quite simply the best naval simulation to be released for the General Public. The battleset that comes with the game deals with East-West conflict in the North Sea, but other battlesets will be available soon. A clever system of three map types is used to effectively manage each mission. The nice thing about *Harpoon* is that the computer takes care of all the boring mechanics, allowing you to concentrate on broad tactics. A must buy for anyone interested in modern navel warfare.
★ ACE RATING 940

INDIANAPOLIS 500

Electronic Arts • PC £24.95
The ultimate racing game. *Indy 500* uses state of the art solid vector graphics which really add something to the high speed action. As in Activision's *Bomber* there are a variety of out-of-cockpit views to select from. the realistic handling of the cars will have you coming back to this game time and time again.
★ ACE RATING 935

INTERPHASE

Imageworks • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £24.99dk
Your task is to guide a female saboteur to the heart of the Dreamtrack Corporation by interacting with a strange 3D environment. The game is very weird and very compelling. It is also very hard – don't expect to get through this one in a hurry.
★ ACE RATING 915

KICK OFF 2

Anco • ST £19.99dk; Amiga £19.99; C64 £TBA
The original *Kick Off* was the second most important event in computer footie since Commodore's seminal *International Soccer* for the C64. An overhead view, superb playability, and true 2-player action made it the game for all others to triumph over. None have to date, except, of course, *Kick Off 2*, which is essentially the original game with some great extras bolted on – loads more detail (you even SEE the muddy pitch on some versions), the chance to develop your own teams, action replay, and finally the tremendous bonus of expandability – Anco are releasing data disks (and you can create your own). Buy it.
★ ACE RATING 930

KNIGHTS OF LEGEND

Origin/Mindscape • PC £29.99dk
Role Playing at its best. An expandable game set in the land of Ashtelarea. There are twenty-four quests to complete, or you can simply enjoy exploring. The program stands out because of its attention to detail. There are no less than forty different algorithms to decide how and when an enemy retreats for instance. Impressive stuff.
★ ACE RATING 945

KNIGHTS OF THE CRYSTAL-LION

US Gold • Amiga £29.99dk including musicassette of soundtrack
The most original game that US Gold has released in a long time. It has been marketed as a 'culture simulator', but that doesn't really say much about the game. You play a member of a futuristic community, and your task is to rise to the highest possible status within that culture. This involves playing through several distinct sub-games. The whole is a highly unusual experience with distinct graphics and a superb soundtrack. This certainly won't be to everybody's taste, but if you are looking for something a little different – try this.
★ ACE RATING 935

M1 TANK PLATOON

Microprose • PC £39.95dk
The ultimate tank sim. Not only are there realistic 3D vector graphic sequences with a hell of a lot of atmosphere, but you also have to think carefully about choice of platoons, men, and the way you tackle each scenario. Microprose had to call on the Freedom of Information Act to get all the information that they needed for the game. The result is one of the most frighteningly accurate tank sims we've seen.
★ ACE RATING 926

MIDWINTER

Microprose • Atari ST £29.99dk
The latest mega hit from top programmer Mike Singleton, creator of *Lords of Midnight*. The game is set on a frozen island in the future. Your task is to recruit members of

the Peace Force to fight off General Masters' invasion force. This is done by managing people and resources via a series of Fractal Maps and menus. The game has disappointing sound, but nice 3D graphics, and enough solid gameplay to keep you going for months.

★ ACE RATING 948

MYTH

System 3 • C64 £9.99cs £14.99dk • Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk

Pushes the C64 and Spectrum right to the limits. Fight your way through several time zones to reach the ultimate confrontation with the god Dameron. The game is captivating not only because of it's size and depth but also because of the superbly animated sprites and sheer playability.

★ ACE RATING 925

OPERATION THUNDERBOLT

Ocean • Atari ST £19.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • Spectrum £9.99cs • Amstrad £9.99cs • C64 £9.99cs

Eminently successful conversion of the hot coin-op hit *Operation Wolf*. Grab your Uzi and shoot your way through hordes of terrorists to rescue the luckless hostages. There are new 3D scenarios this time to add to the frantic lead spitting of the original. Best played with a light gun, but a mouse will suffice if you don't have one. Joystick or keyboard controls don't really cope however.

★ ACE RATING 927

ACE CLASSICS!

All the games in HOT OFF THE SHELF – this month's software selection – have been released in recent months and should be readily available from your local dealer or by mail-order. We've chosen the titles carefully to ensure that, if one should take your fancy, it ought to be readily available. Don't forget that most dealers will be happy to order titles for you if they haven't got them in stock.

However, the truly discerning player knows full well that some of the greatest games of all time are not generally available in the shops. ACE is compiling a listing for next month of History's Greatest Games. Not only that, but we'll be giving you advice on where and how you can get your sticky paws on them. Some of them you'll know immediately, *Thrust*, for example, and *Impossible Mission* – but who remembers *Citizen USA?* Don't miss next month's definitive guide to putting together the ultimate software collection.

PGA TOUR GOLF

Electronic Arts • PC £24.99

Well, what can I say? For anyone who's never set eyes on a golf sim, this is one. Four accurately modelled courses and a wealth of options provide for a comprehensive and playable game. Each course is has been designed for the proffesional player, so fortunately there's a driving range to allow you to practice that swing. Features such as course maps, percentage range indicators and a 3-D display of the green showing every pit and ridge all contribute in pushing PGA GOLF into the ACE Rated category.

★ ACE RATING 910

PIPEMANIA

Entertainment International • Atari ST £19.95dk • Amiga £19.95dk • Spectrum £9.99cs £14.95dk • C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk • Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk • PC £19.95dk • Macintosh £24.95dk • Archimedes £24.95dk • MSX £9.95cs £14.95dk • BBC/Electron £9.95cs £14.95dk

The game that proves plumbing can be fun. You must construct a continuous length of pipe from several sections before the flooz escapes. The action is just as compelling as that in games like *Tetris* and will have you burning the midnight oil in an attempt to beat the odds. It is available for practically every machine, so there is no excuse for not owning a copy.

★ ACE RATING 910

PLAYER MANAGER

Anco • Atari ST £19.95dk • Amiga £19.95dk • Spectrum £9.95cs £14.95dk • C64 £9.95cs £14.95dk • Amstrad £9.95cs £14.95dk

Kick Off with a management/strategy element. The game is completely icon driven, making it easy to get into. The management detail is superb, right down to planning in-match tactics. And for the match you can either watch from the sidelines or join in with the *Kick Off* style fun.

★ ACE RATING 920

PRO TENNIS TOUR

UBI Soft/Blue Byte • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • Spectrum £9.99cs £14.99dk • C64 £12.99cs £16.99dk • Amstrad £9.99cs £16.99dk • PC £29.99dk

One of the best tennis games yet. The control method works really well, although the standard of the computer players is good, so you'll have to put in a lot of practice. There is a choice of grass, concrete, clay, and indoor courts, as well as comprehensive practice options. A good way of spending a few hours while you are waiting for

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Mirrorsoft/Spectrum Holobyte • Atari ST TBA • Amiga TBA • PC £29.99
High speed racing round the streets of San Francisco in one of four Corvettes on offer. The superb 3D colour graphics in the game give a great sense of the wind in your hair as you roar down precariously steep streets desperately trying to avoid pedestrians and other vehicles. Realistic and lots of fun, this game, from the people who brought you Falcon, will have you hooked.
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WARHEAD

Activision • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk
Veteran programmer Glynn Williams' latest masterpiece is set in deep space. Earth is under threat from a horde of nasty extra-terrestrial insects. The only hope is the FOE-57, an advanced craft absolutely loaded down with weaponry. Fast solid vector graphics and rapid action make this a winner. Work your way up through the training missions and you'll soon be zapping away quite happily.
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Infogrames • Atari ST £24.99dk • Amiga £24.99dk • PC £24.99dk
Effectively the follow-up to the resoundingly successful *Tetris*, Welltris takes the original idea and literally turns it on its head. Seen from a plan-view, it requires you to rotate coloured shapes that fall down the walls, fitting them together to make a horizontal or vertical unbroken line. This achieved, the line disappears to make way for another. Despite the obvious connection, *Welltris* looks good and plays well.
★ **ACE RATING 901**

TELL ME!

...if there's a game you think deserves inclusion in next month's Classic Games Guide (see page 153). Naturally we've got just a few ideas of our own, but I'm keen to hear from anyone with a personal preference for a long-forgotten release. Write to:

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Thalion: *Dragonflight* (ST, Amiga £34.99). RPG set in fantasyworld.

Microprose: *Silent Service 2* (PC). Follow up to successful submarine simulation.

Micro Style: *Oriental Games* (ST £24.99, Spectrum £9.99 tape,£14.99 disk, CPC £14.99 tape, £19.99 disk). More martial arts antics.

Accolade: *Bar Games* (Amiga £24.99). Collection of 'traditional' pub games on computer. Doesn't include 'Bunnies', 'Spoof', or anything involving drinking forfeits.

Ishido: (PC £29.99). Board game style program with an Oriental flavour.

Saturday 8
Core Design will be making a personal appearance at the Virgin Games Centre complete with its *Corporation* digitiser. If you want to have yourself featured in your copy of *Corporation*, be at 100 Oxford Street today (further details in our Dealers section).

Sunday 9

Monday 10

Tuesday 11

Wednesday 12

Thursday 13
You think it's been hot this summer? On this day in 1922, a record temperature of 58 C (136.4 F) was recorded in El Azizia in Libya. Computer Entertainment Show begins at Earl's Court (trade-only day)

Friday 14
CES second trade only day at Earl's Court

Saturday 15
Battle of Britain Day. Independence Day, Costa Rica. Anniversary of the first publication of The Sun. Computer Entertainment Show opens to the general public at Earl's Court Exhibition Centre, London, 10.00am, tickets £5.00 (unless you've got a £1 discount voucher from this month's cover – see page 26.)

Sunday 16
Independence Day, Mexico. Last day of the Computer Entertainment Show at Earl's Court.

Monday 17

Tuesday 18
Independence Day, Chile. Birthday of Peter Shilton, England goalkeeper, 1949.

15-21 SEPTEMBER

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Accolade: *Altered Destiny* (PC £29.99). You play the archetypal Mr Average in an exploration-based quest set in a fantasy world. *Star Control* (PC £29.99). 3D combat in outer space.

Image Works: *Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles* (PC £29.99, Amiga). Need one say more? *Cadaver* (PC £29.99). Bitmap Brothers latest. *Dungeon Master* (PC £29.99). Renowned role-playing game. *Bloodwych* (PC £29.99).*Theme Park Mystery* (PC £29.99) *Back to the Future 2* (Amiga £24.99). Become Marty McFly in this arcade-adventure. Also included in Commodore's latest Amiga bundle. *Interface* (PC £29.99)

PSS/Mirrorsoft: *Battlemaster* (PC £29.99) *Final Battle* (PC £29.99)

Electronic Zoo: *Xiphos* (£24.99). Arcade cum strategy cum trading game, *Elite*-style. *Subbuteo* (£24.99). From table top to desktop for the 46-year old version of football. *Eco Phantoms* (£24.99)

Rainbird: *Carrier Command* (Mac £34.99). Highly rated aerial combat game, now in glorious black and white.

Microprose: *F19* (Amiga £29.99).

22-28 SEPTEMBER

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Accolade: *Jack Nicklaus Unlimited Course Design* (Amiga). Play on Nicklaus's own courses, or design some of your own. *Ishido* (Amiga £24.99). Oriental board game. *Elvira, Mistress of the Dark* (ST, Amiga £24.99). The larger than life camp horror queen makes it on to the small screen.

Entertainment International /Empire: *Team Yankee* (PC). Baseball game.
Electronic Arts: *Deluxe Paint* (ST £49.99 - introductory price). *Lord of the Rings* (PC, £29.99). First of a trilogy of games based on Tolkien's trilogy of books, from Interplay. *Battlechess II: Chinese Chess* (PC, £29.99) Also from Interplay, the chess game where the pieces actually make a fight of it. *Powermonger* (prices, formats see review in this issue). Latest from Bullfrog. *Fountain of Dreams* (£24.99). More fantasy role-playing. *Magic Fly* (ST Amiga, £24.99). Destory the evil Ceti Triad in your millipede-lookalike Magic Flymobile. *Earl Weaver* data disk (Macintosh) *Bard's Tale III* (PC £29.99). Avenge the destruction of fabled city Skara Brae. *The Immortal* (ST, Amiga, 1Mb only) *Stormovik* (PC £29.99). Russian plane stars in US flight sim
US Gold/Access: *Mean Streets* (ST £19.99, Amiga, PC £24.99) Someone has died. Suicide or murder? You play the detective on the case.

US Gold: *Operation Harrier* (ST £19.99, Amiga, PC £24.99). Latest from the programmers of *Rotox*. *Vaccine* (ST £19.99, Amiga, PC £24.99). Defend your own bodyagainst mutant virus.

Micro Style: *International Soccer Challenge* (ST, Amiga £24.99).Footie sim held over from the frantic World Cup rush to publish, boasting unusual side-on graphics with some great animation (see this issue).
Palace: *Dragon's Breath* (PC £29.99).

Krisalis: *Rogue Trooper* (ST, Amiga). Futuristic warfare, with you as sole survivor of the universe, out for revenge.

Wednesday 19
Anniversary of the screening of the first cartoon 'talkie': Walt Disney's Steamboat Willie, starring Mickey Mouse, in 1928.

Thursday 20
Jewish New Year 5751 (Rosh Hashanah)

Friday 21
National Day, Malta.

Saturday 22

Sunday 23
National Day, Saudi Arabia. First day of autumn. Anniversary of the first Ceefax transmission, 1974. Birthday of Bruce Springsteen, 1949.

Monday 24
Mt Everest climbed from the south west face for the first time,by Dougal Haston and Doug Scott, 1975.

Tuesday 25

Wednesday 26

Thursday 27

Friday 28

Saturday 29
Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)

Sunday 30
National Day, Botswana. Anniversary of the start of Radio 1, 1967.

OCTOBER

Monday 1
Republic Day, Nigeria. National Day, China. Independence Day, Cyprus. Beginning of the pheasant shooting season.

Tuesday 2

Wednesday 3

Thursday 4
Independence Day, Lesotho. Tabernacles (Succoth)

Friday 5
Birthday of 'Sir' Bob Geldof, 1954.

Saturday 6
Anniversary of the first publication of The Independent.

Sunday 7

29 SEPT - 7 OCT

WEEK'S RELEASES AT A GLANCE

Accolade: *Stratego* (PC, £29.99). More oriental strategy. *Search for the King* (Amiga £24.99) Humorous adventure-style game.

Firebird: *Fireball* (ST, Amiga £24.99)

Elite: *Gremlins 2* (PC £24.99) *World Championship Soccer* (PC £24.99). Another contender in this overcrowded field. Championship contenders or mid-table alsorans? *World Championship Golf* (PC £24.99)

Micro Style: *International Soccer Challenge* (PC £24.99). *Oriental Games* (Amiga £24.99). Selection of martial arts combat mini-games.

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ADVENTURELINE

Welcome to our new home! During the next few months, I'll be expanding this section to include more pages, gossip, news, and mini-reviews of adventure software for all lovers of the straight and narrow path. And if you've got any queries, contributions, suggestions, or requests let me have them! Write to me at the usual ACE address (see the contents page) and I'll do what I can...

ZAK McKRACKEN

Our solution continued, from Mike Bareham

Now that you have all four characters together go out of the door and walk back to 13th Ave. Walk to the bus and switch to Annie. Pick up the blotter and the plastic card then out of the door to the bus. Switch to Zak and use the kazoo, then use the cashcard in the card reader when the door opens. Switch to Annie and use the cashcard in the card reader. Still as Annie use the reservations terminal and buy a ticket to London. Go to the plane and walk through the automatic doors.

Switch to Zak and use the reservations terminal to buy a ticket to Miami, then walk to the plane. Give the book to the bum and he will give you a bottle of whiskey and return the book too.Buy a ticket to Cairo then walk to the plane. Buy a ticket to Katmandu then walk to the plane.

Walk outside then give the book to the guard, who will then open the door for you. Through the door, listen to what the Guru has to say then go back outside. Walk to the right of the bale of hay and use the lighter on it then walk to the left to the jail and pick up the flagpole. Go back to the yak and use the cashcard on the licence plate.

Buy a ticket to Kinshasa then walk to the plane. Next walk through the jungle until you come out of it (any direction will do) then enter the shamen's hut. Give the golf club to the shamen and he will take you outside where the shamen and other natives will dance around the fire. When they stop they will bob up and down. You must now make a note of the order in which they bob up and down as you will need it later. Go back through the jungle to the airport.

Buy a ticket to Cairo then walk to the plane. Buy a ticket to London then walk to the plane. Buy a ticket to San Fransico then walk to the plane. Buy a ticket to Lima then walk to the plane.

Walk through the jungle as before until you get out of it. Use the bread crumbs on the bird feeder and the blue crystal on the bird. You can now control the movements of the bird. Fly to the left eye of the huge carving to the right and pick up the scroll. Now fly back to Zak. Walk through the jungle as quickly as possible back to the airport.

Buy a ticket to Mexico then walk through the doors. Walk through the jungle again until you reach a clearing which has three temple entrances. Enter any of the entrances and use the map map enclosed called "Mexico Temple" to find your way around. You will have to use the "What is" command to find torches to light so that you can see where you are going. Find the room on the map called the crystal shard and make your way to it. When the room is found switch to Leslie.

CHRONOQUEST

D.G. Lyndon reaches the end of the road...

MEXICO:
Machine - east twice.
Trunk - look at base of trunk, get necklace, north twice.
Statue - look at stairs, turn disc on statue's hand, get key, west.
Jungle - west, sw, south.
Maya - Use necklace on Maya warrior then ne, n, ne, ne, ne, n, n, nw, ne,e.
Pyramid - use leather gloves on bush, use ring in hole in slab, wait time until 13:00, look temple door, use bone in left hole in door frame, then up.
Chamber - use key on keyhole, look in chest, pick up punch card, down, w, sw, se, se, s, s, sw, sw, sw, sw, s, e, e.
Machine - up, push switch.

CHATEAU:
Machine - south.
Library - get stone and photo, north.
Machine - up, push switch, use punch card in slot.

THE FUTURE:
Machine - push buttons on control panel, use stone on guard's nose, get uniform and strange key, use uniform, north, e, e, n, n, w. Push panel with circle and cross (left side of machine), use leather gloves on fuses, e, s, s.
Cell - use strange key on box next to east door (bottom right screen).
Richard then gives himself up and that's all there is to it!

CORRUPTION

Getting started with Alexis Kofteros, Cyprus

9.00: Go to the cubicle. Open cistern and get bag. Go to the dealing room then find your BMW. Open the glove compartment and get screwdriver. Exit car. Smash Volvo's window with screwdriver. Enter Volvo and get folder. Exit folder and read the Affadavit. Open bag. Examine powder and drop bag.
9.45: David will enter and he'll get the powder. Go to Theresa's office and wait until she leaves. Get letter. Open drawer and get brass key. Unlock door with brass key and enter your partner's office. Get tape. Go to margaret's office and get envelope. Read envelope and cheque, then enter your office. Open cabinet and get certificate. Now you have all the evidence that could send you to jail. Go to your BMW and put tape in stereo. Get tape, return to Margaret's office. Wait until 11.25.

BARDS TALE I

Hints & Tips from R. G. Lewis

Explore everywhere. Start with the town then the sewers (4 levels). Then go to the catacombs (2 levels), the castle (3 levels), Kyleran's tower (1 level) and finally Mangar's tower (5 levels).

You should have two magicians in your

band and get them up to archmage quickly. It is also useful to have a bard, a monk, a warrior and a paladin. This is a good mix of men. When you reach archmage, cast "GRSU". This gives you a greater demon which is very useful.

If you have a large fight, use one mage to cast "REST" every battleround to keep your men's hit points up to full. If you get some smoke in your eyes cast a new light spell. Make sure you keep enough space to collect new items. Change your warrior's weapon to see which cause most damage.

When you enter the castle you can teleport up to level 3 (2 above). You will come across a room which says "barracks". Enter and you will be faced by 99 x 4 berserkers. Fight these and you will get 59000+ experience points. It is a good idea to keep a note of the directions by casting "SCSI", then you can exit the castle by placing the "eye" in the statue of the mad god. You will then be teleported back to the gate of Kyleran's tower. The "eye" is in a chest in the castle.

When you enter Kyleran's tower you must find the wizard Kyleran who will give you an onyx key. You need this to get into Mangar's tower. You should also find a silver triangle in a room on its own. When you come across a crystal statue it will keep returning to life after you kill it unless you are using the crystal sword.

When you exit Kyleran's tower go to the sewers then teleport from the cellar "16N, 17E, 3D". This will take you to the long stairs going up which you should take to get you to the gate of Mangar's tower.

You ought to be at least level 20 before tackling Mangar's tower, and have two archmages. Explore all levels of the tower to find seven words which will form a message needed to enter level 4.

Useful objects found in the tower are:
Mage Staff - recovers spell points.
Conjuror Staff - halves spell cost
Frost Horn - More powerful than fire horn.
Dragon Wand - burns like frost horn.

POLICE QUEST I

The continued solution from Anthony Quinn

Your next call will be to the coffee shop where a group of bikers are causing a disturbance. Enter the coffee shop and you will be instructed to go to the bar next door. Notify dispatch of your arrival. Enter the bar and make sure you have your nightstick from the car with you.

Approach the leader of the gang who will ask what you want. Type "move your bikes" and he will reply "and who is going to make us". One of the gang will try to grab you. Press F10 quickly. This will draw your nightstick and the gang will back off quietly.

Go back to the coffee shop and talk to the owner. He will thank you. Notify dispatch of your success. On your return to the police station stop in the hallway and examine the table. You will notice a memo pad and in/out trays. Put in memo to transfer to narcotics. Place memo in In tray and return to patrol.

Your next call will be to a drunk driver. Chase, then approach with caution. Before getting out of car, notify dispatch. They will give you information on the suspect. When you arrive at the suspect's car type "smell", then "examine licence". Return licence. Tell your suspect to "get out" then type "FST". The suspect will blow into the bag. Then "cuff him". The man will ask you to cuff him at the front. Type "no". Then type "read rights", "question suspect". Tell him to follow you to the car. Open door and tell suspect to get in. Notify dispatch and go to jail.

When you arrive at the jail, open the door and tell your suspect to follow you. Remember always to close your door or your car will be gone when you come back. Open the lockers outside the jail and put your gun in (weapons are not allowed inside the jail) then close locker and press button on the wall. The jailer will open the door.

Enter and he will ask you what the charge is. Type "drunk and driving". You must tell the jailer to book the suspect. Then type "remove cuffs" and put him in cell. The jailer will have a message for you. Do as he requests.

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Lost patrol	17.99	14.99	-
Magnum 4	19.99	17.99	-
Manchester Utd	19.99	17.99	-
Manhunter New Yorker	21.99	21.99	19.99
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Matrix Marauders	169.99	16.99	17.99
Microprose World Cup Soccer 2	16.99	15.99	-
Midnight Resistance	17.99	17.99	-
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Millenium 2.2	11.99	-	13.99
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Ninja Warriors	16.99	16.99	-
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Nuclear war	17.99	-	-
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Rainbow Islands	16.99	14.99	-
Reach for the Stars	16.99	-	-
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Sly Spy	16.99	16.99	-
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Speedball 2	17.25	16.99	-
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Steel	7.99	-	-
Strider	16.99	15.99	17.25
Stunt Car Racer	17.25	15.99	16.99
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Supremacy	19.99	19.99	-
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Thunderstrike	16.99	15.99	-
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Total Recall	16.99	16.99	-
Tower of Babel	8.99	13.99	16.99
Triad Vol 2	13.99	15.99	-
Triad Vol 3	19.99	19.99	-
Turbo Outrun	16.99	14.99	-
Turrucan	17.25	16.99	-
Tusker	16.99	16.99	-
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TV Sports Football	17.99	16.99	19.99
Ultima 5	19.99	19.99	19.99
UMS 2	16.99	16.99	-
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Untouchables	16.99	14.99	-
Venus Fly Trap	16.99	16.99	
Vindicators	6.99	-	-
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Weird Dreams	9.99	9.99	16.99
Wings	19.99	17.99	19.99
Wipeout	15.99	15.99	16.99
World Cup Soccer Italia 90	16.99	16.99	17.25
X-Out	15.99	15.99	-
Xenomorph	17.50	16.99	17.99
Xenophobe	7.99	-	-
Xenon 2	11.99	-	-
Xybots	9.99	-	-
Zak McKraken	16.99	16.99	-
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CHARTS

1990 TOP TENS

The ACE Charts system kicks off in its new Pink Position by giving you the definitive list of top scoring games as reviewed by ALL British games magazines. These are the high scorers so far in 1990...

COMMODORE 64

Batman	Ocean	Dec	95.75
Int'al 3D Tennis	Palace	Aug	95.25
Turbo Outrun	US Gold	Jan	95
Turrican	Rainbow Arts	Jul	94.25
Rainbow Islands	Ocean	May	94
Flimbo's Quest	System 3	Jul	93.5
Myth	System 3	Feb	93.13
Vendetta	System 3	Jun	93.05
Buggy Boy	Encore	May	93
Ghosts'n'Goblins	Encore	Jan	92

AMSTRAD CPC

Batman - the Movie	Ocean	Jan	91.5
Cecco Collection	Hewson	Sep	91
Klax	Domark	Sep	90
Myth	System 3	Jun	88.17
Christmas Collection	Hewson	Jan	87.5
Chase HQ	Ocean	Apr	86.75
Scapeghost	Level 9	Mar	86.5
Ghostbusters II	Activision	Mar	86.5
Dynamite Dux	Activision	Jan	86
Ikari Warriors	Encore	Jun	85.17

DON'T FORGET YOU CAN WIN PRIZES BY PREDICTING NEXT MONTH'S ENTRIES.

IBM PC

Carrier Command	Rainbird	Feb	99.13
Ultima VI	Origin	Sep	98.5
E-Motion	US Gold	May	97.5
Railroad Tycoon	Microprose	Sep	93.65
Flight of the Intruder	S. Holobyte	Sep	92.67
Bomber	Activision	Jan	92.08
Starflight II	Elect'c Arts	May	92
Indianapolis 500	Elect'c Arts	May	91.5
PGA Tour Golf	Elect'c Arts	Sep	89.67
Pipemania	Empire	Aug	88.75

WHAT THE FIGURES MEAN...

First, of course, you've got the name of the game. Then the software house and – in the last column – the average score (converted to a percentage with typical ACE precision to two decimal places) the game received in ALL reviews. The month tells you when the game received its listed rating.

Don't forget that the review ratings are taken from all UK magazines, not just ACE. We don't agree with some of the judgements here, but all review ratings are, to a certain extent, subjective and depend on both the policies of the magazine and the preferences of the reviewer. In our opinion, for example, *Kick Off 2* on the Amiga should get a higher rating than *Operation Thunderbolt*...

ATARI ST

Damocles	Novagen	Jan	94.63
Midwinter	Rainbird	Jul	93.54
F19 Stealth Fighter	Microprose	Sep	93.45
Xenon II: Megablast	Image Works	Dec	93.04
Chaos Strikes Back	FTL	Apr	92.92
Tower of Babel	Rainbird	Mar	91.5
Hard Drivin'	Domark	Feb	90.37
Player Manager	Anco	May	90.25
Interphase	Image Works	Jan	89.6
Resolution 101	Millenium	Aug	89.29

SPECTRUM

Myth	System 3	Feb	95
Rainbow Islands	Ocean	Jun	94.5
Chase HQ	Ocean	Mar	94.14
Head over Heels	Hit Squad	Sep	93.25
Untouchables	Ocean	Jan	92.92
Hammerfist	Activision	Jun	92.75
Midnight Resistance	Ocean	Sep	92.33
Op Thunderbolt	Ocean	Jan	92
Batman - The Movie	Ocean	Jan	91.01
Hard Drivin'	Domark	Feb	90.7

AMIGA

F16 Combat Pilot	D. Integration	Jan	97.33
F29 Retaliator	Ocean	Feb	95.6
Sim City	Infogrames	Feb	94.29
Space Rogue	*Origin*	Jun	94
Op Thunderbolt	Ocean	Mar	93.47
Tower of Babel	Rainbird	Jul	92.92
Kick Off 2	Anco	Sep	92.86
Xenon II: Megablast	Image Works	Dec	92.6
Rock'n'Roll	Rainbow Arts	Jan	92.17
Batman	Ocean	Dec	92.04

THIS MONTH

Each month we print the top five games, as reviewed in the latest editions of computer magazines, for each of the main computer formats. Don't forget – because these charts are based on review ratings around the country, they make an excellent buyers' guide.

AMIGA

***Corporation* Core Design 92.5**
***Kick Off 2* Anco 91.43**
***Turrican* Rainbow Arts 90.9**
***Paradroid 90* Hewson 90.25**
***Klax* Domark 89.09**

Both *Kick Off 2* and *Turrican* have had to move for this month's talk of the town, Core Design's *Corporation*.

COMMODORE 64

***Murder* US Gold 92.5**
***Klax* Domark 89.84**
***Bloodwych* Image Works 89**
***Blood Money* Psygnosis 80.09**
***Italy 1990* US Gold 75.5**

US Gold's Agatha Christie-style mystery game comes from nowhere to take the C64 hot spot, with *Italy 1990* as the last gasp for the World Cup releases.

AMSTRAD CPC

***Stunt Car Racer* Micro Style 94.5**
***Cecco Collection* Hewson 88**
***Klax* Domark 86.46**
***Italy 1990* US Gold 84.84**
***Fighter Bomber* Activision 82.56**

Second month in the chart for Hewson's compilation and Domark's well-received *Klax*. The CPC version of *Stunt Car Racer* looks as though it's been worth the wait.

IBM PC

***PGA Tour Golf* Electronic Arts 88.46**
***Thunderstrike* Millennium 84.94**
***Bad Blood* Origin 80.25**
***Powerdrift* Activision 79.5**
***Guns or Butter* Mindscape 75**

Not a single one of these could manage an average score of over 90%! *PGA Golf* is in here for the second month running and looks like a good solid buy.

SPECTRUM

***Head over Heels* Hit Squad 93.25**
***Midnight Resistance* Ocean 91.17**
***Escape/Robot Monsters* Domark 89.5**
***Sly Spy Secret Agent* Ocean 85.25**
***Adidas Ch'ship Football* Ocean 84.84**

A very static chart (where are your Spectrum autumn releases, software houses?). Budget rerelease *Head Over Heels* has even managed to score exactly the same as last month.

ATARI ST

***Kick Off 2* Anco 92.5**
***Sim City* Infogrames 91.33**
***Monty Python* Virgin 85.75**
***Breach 2* Impressions 84**
***Flood* Electronic Arts 83.59**

A completely new top five for the ST. *Sim City* and *Kick Off 2* are, of course, already famous on other formats.

Data collated and calculated using Borland's Quattro Professional.

ACE MAGAZINE DOES NOT CONDONE PIRACY! ANY ENTRIES WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE FEDERATION AGAINST SOFTWARE THEFT.

ACE READERS' PAGES

FOR SALE

SPECTRUM 128K £140 Interface 50+ games, joystick. Tel: Aster 4pm 081-440-9798

ATARI 529STFM for sale. Immaculate condition, includes 12 games, 50 blank disks, 2 joysticks, 22 magazines. £250. Tel: 0273-46886

ST ORIGINALS. 40 Titles £3-15 and lots of mags also selling1040stfm, printer and games £400. Tel: Philip 0277-218616.

ATARI ST hard disk drive bits + pieces, most card £50 SCSi card £75 case £35 40 Meg drive £180 Tel:0495272092

COMMODORE C64 world cup pack unwanted present never used original packing all accessories 1 year guaranteed still receipts etc. Bargain £120 ono Tel: 0322-334635 (evenings)

PC ENGINE games for sale - Gunhead, R-Type, Dragon Sprit, Altered Beast, Space Harrier. Stunning condition £20 Tel: 0494-722598 Quick!

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SPECTRUM +3 just serviced £210 of games, Robocop, Elite, Sentinel, Spare Power pack, Free Tape lead. £115 Tel977-4715 Leo.

WINNER, Horse racing program for Atari ST 520, easy to use, original, single sided disk £10 R.Winter 18 Cypress Close, Wokingham.

A500 Memory Expansion £400 games, 40 Blank disks, 3 joysticks. All necessities TV Modulator, Manuals etc.. £400 Tel Bill 021-475-6230

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PENPALS

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AMIGA contacts wanted Worldwide Write to: Stephen 24 Alaxandra St Portland Vic 3305 Australia.

Forget the rest and thhink of the Best. Amiga User. Contacts wanted. Write to: Rashad Zainal PO Box 593 manama Bahrain.

OTHER

LYNX GAMEBOY consoles Fanzine Tips news send SAE to C/A 8 Faraday House Kingstone Rd., Wembley Middx HA9 9AY.

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HELPLINE

ATARI ST 68000 and STOS coders wanted to help start a new demo group. Tel: 0844-237308 or write to Steve 1 Charles Field Close Brill, Bucks.

WILL ANYONE do colour printing for me from Art done on Amiga using Digi Paint or Photonn Paint? Will pay! Please contact Gavin Harriss, 38 Portland drive, Nuneaton, Warks CV10 9HY. Print outs needed for my GCSE Art!

BLOODWYCH MAPS - £5 Bloodwych Data Maps £5 SAE required state game!. 96 St Marys St, Southampton.

HELP wanted in finding Mickey Mouse by Gremlin for the Amiga B Carvacho 113 Winchester St, Pimlico London SW1

SAM Owners don't dispair! Send for Advanced ZAT programming PO Box 488 Tweedale Telford TF7 4SU only 60p + stamp Reviews, interviews adventures more inc Sci Fi strip & comps (Also for Sceccys!)

Tips oz Solution needed for Kings Quest 1 or 2 E Schulton PO Box 192 77UOAD Coevoiden Holland.

HELP!! I urgently need a space bar or cheap keyboard for my Amiga 500 Tel: 0462-731685 after 6pm.

HELP Needed with Driller and the Vindicator on the C64 on Driller can someone tell me how to gain access to every sector on the planet? And what are the passwords on the first level of the Vindicators? I can also help with the Last Ninja and Labyrinth on the C64 Any Help greatly Appreciated Contact : M.Castle, 9 Kingswood drive, Craigieburn 3064, Victoria, Australia.ULTIMA 5 HELP!! Send with Large SAE to: Gavin Harriss 38 Portland Drive, Nuneaton, Warks. CV10 9HY.

HI would someone out there please tell me how to use pokes on the C64 (cass) Write to Peter M, 194 Walton Village, Walton, Liverpool 4. L4 6TW

HELP WANTED for new Amiga User contact M.Philips 17 Cwngelli Rd., Morriston Swansea SA6 7PD.

MEGADRIVE OWNERS Help is needed to complete a Questionaire on Megadrive. Write to D.Holmes 149 Sutton Rd., Shrewsbury Shrops.

NEEDED ONE Space Shuttle Tape for Amstrad CPC 464 Will pay for tape also any other Space Shuttle Items.

CONTACTS WANTED Write to 687 High Rd., Seven Kings Ilford Essex. Tel: 081-590-4214 London UK also cheats for games.

NEED HELP WITH AMIGA GAMES? If so then send £2 or SAE for disk Fanzine to J.Shelley, 12Moreton Rd., Buckingham Bucks.

PLEASE CAN anyone give me any hints or pokes for any of the following. Predator, Batman the caped Crusader, Eagles Nest Mig 29 TI Dizzy, F16 Combat Pilot, Fighter Bomber, Stunt Car racer, Robocop, R-Type, Platoon Future Bike Simulator. Please Write to: Matt Campbell, 4 County Rd., Mirch, Cambs.

HELP ME! I desperately need Amiga pokes, cheats etc.. for any game 10p per poke. Go on help a fellow Amiga User and feel better for it. Iain Mccreade, 20 Pitreavie Place Kirkcaldry, Fife. Ky2 6JX.

HELP given on the following Nintendo Gameboy games: Tetris, Super mario Land, Tennis, Sokoan 2 Shanghai, Nemesis, Batman, Solar Striker, Aswik World and Dracula. I have also played loads more, so may be also wanted, I would especially like to meet someone in Sussex to play 2 player games. Anyway, if you need help or would just like to swap games etc.. please phone Peter on 0273-463886.

If you need help, hintsheets, maps or cheats (List of games goes on forever!!!) Write to Stuart Hardy, 33 Fir Tree drive, Wales, Sheffield S31 8LZ. All queries despatched as soon as possible and letters enclosing SAE will have Priority..

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ACE DEA S

Our regular column highlighting special offers around the country. Useful to check out before you head for the shops...

Liverpool-based City Software is kicking off the football season with a month-long extravaganza of competitions and special offers. The store has promised to get its hands on every football game it can to sell in the shops, while prizes such as T-shirts and badges are on offer to winners of its spot-the-ball quick competitions.

City Software is also hoping to feature the Sega Megadrive strongly when that reaches the shops and a night out at the movies for two is still available for winners of its *Back to the Future II* raffles.

In Yorkshire, **Computer Store** outlets are holding a big 'trivia-quiz' style competition where the prize on offer is a Nintendo Entertainment System. Any purchase you make from any Computer Store branch will come complete with a card bearing four simple computer/console-oriented questions. Get the answers right and you'll be in the running for the Nintendo.

Computer Stores will also be holding special promotional days throughout September when a particular software package, or series of titles, will have prizes and freebies thrown in with them when you buy. Check with your nearest Computer Store outlet (locations below) for details of each big prize day as they come up.

There are still plenty of the Computer Store Amiga packs to go. For the usual selling price of £399, you can buy not only Commodore's Amiga Batpack or Flight of Fantasy pack, but take away £200-worth of extra accessories as well, including more software, a mouse and T-shirts.

Core Design will be making a personal appearance at the **Virgin Games Centre** on Saturday September 8, and they're bringing their *Corporation* scanner with them. So if you fancy owning a copy of *Corporation* personalised to include your own digitised mug and name in the game, be there. Normally, your own *Corporation* persona will cost you £2; at Virgin it will cost you £1, and that offer lasts throughout September.

Computershops are adding a £1 gift voucher to every Sunmax Zipstick joystick that you buy, and, in a back to school frame of mind, there's a free pencil case going with every copy of Database's new *Fun School 3* sold.

OUTLETS

City Software is on Lime Street, Liverpool.

There are Microbyte stores in the Arndale Centre, Manchester; the Broadmarsh Centre, Nottingham; Kirkgate, Wakefield; the Metro Centre, Gateshead; the Greenmarket, Newcastle Upon Tyne; the Kirkgate Centre, Bradford; the Bull Ring Centre, Birmingham; the County Arcade, Leeds; and Pasture Road, Goole.

You can find Computer Shop outlets in the Arndale Centre, Manchester; Newcastle, Leeds, Preston, Sunderland, Stockton and Nottingham. Also part of the Computer Shop chain are the two Games Store outlets in Carlisle and Middlesbrough, which stock role-playing games as well as computer software.

Virgin has its Games Centre outlets on London's Oxford Street (at Marble Arch, within the Megastore, and at no 100) and Bristol, and also in Megastores in Birmingham, Brighton, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow (at Union St and Argyle St), Leeds, and Nottingham.

You can find Computer Shop outlets in the Arndale Centre, Manchester; Newcastle, Leeds, Preston, Sunderland, Stockton and Nottingham. Also part of the Computer Shop chain are the two Games Store outlets in Carlisle and Middlesbrough, which stock role-playing games as well as computer software.

All offers and promotions are subject to availability of stock. Although we do our best to ensure our dealer promotion information is accurate at the time of going to press, ACE cannot take any responsibility for changes or cancellations to dealers' plans.

Attention dealers! Don't keep your promotions, competitions, special offers, etc, a secret. Tell us at ACE and we'll tell everybody else.

SHOP WATCH

A new regular section in which software seller Dirk Longhorn gives a view from the other side of the counter. This month, could the ST be dying out...and why?

It doesn't seem that long ago since Commodore 64 and Atari 800XL owners used to congregate together in our store and argue about which was the better computer. The discussions were sometimes tedious, occasionally lucid, and invariably childish but there were always pointless. Neither group would alter its opinion, no matter what evidence was presented in either machine's favour.

Not long after these happy scenes took place, the whole argument became irrelevant. The Atari 800XL began to die, partly due to Atari discontinuing production of the machine and partly due to the attitude of Atari owners. A typical Saturday would see several groups of Atari owners enter the store together to scan the software racks. Their comments were depressingly similar:

'Got it...Got it...Got it...Got it coming this week...Got it...Had it two years ago...Got it....Got it....'

This would even apply to new releases. The piracy network on the Atari 8-bit was so vast that it seemed most of the owners got the latest titles before the shops. They would stand around talking about 'Happy Cartridges' and copies of games that were, at that time, unreleased and would occasionally make conversation with us in their smug, sneering manner:

'Have you got *Winter Games* in yet?'

'I'm sorry, it's not released yet...'

'Isn't it? (Snigger) Oh, I've had it for months...'

Eventually, of course, retailers realise that stocking full-price software for the machine was pointless, and would stop. With retailers not stocking new releases, it wasn't long before the majority of software houses stopped publishing them, and that led to the machine taking its place in the computer graveyard alongside the Oric, Dragon, (original) Lynx, and all the other one-time familiar names.

The sad part was that there were (and still are) Atari owners who are not pirates. They have had to suffer for the sins of their peers.

BACK TO THE FUTURE II

AND NOW...

Several years on and we find Commodore and Atari owners still bitching. Now, though, the arguments take place in the letters columns of magazines and the machines are the Amiga and the ST. The disturbing thing is how many Atari ST owners have upgraded from Atari 8-bit machines '...because there's no software for them...' (ever wondered why?

Equally worrying is the fact that the old network still seems to be intact...and there's disturbing evidence that it may be doing for the ST what it did for the 800XL.

It is widely believed that the ST has (to date) outsold the Amiga in this country. Certainly a close look at market research indicates that the machine (despite increasing Amiga sales) still has a larger user base than the Commodore machine in the UK. Why then, despite the majority of 'big' titles being £5 more expensive, do we sell FIVE TIMES as much Amiga software as ST?

I know that we are not along in this respect, and here's a trade secret – one of the major software houses will release future products first on Amiga format, and ONLY if it sells 'well' willit then be released on the ST. Deja vu anyone?

I sincerely hope that the ST does not follow it's predecessor into oblivion, but if it does...you'll know why.

To change the subject somewhat, I noticed that the September issue of ACE carried an update review of *Red Storm Rising* (Amiga version) and gave it the fairly low mark of 603. I realise that reviews are subjective, but if you like Microprose type games don't be too put off – I'm absolutely hooked on it.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA MICROMANNICA

Here it is...a list of those vital topics that every up-market gamester needs to have at his command. Just because you thrashed the host at two-player Tetris doesn't mean you'll be the star of the party. No chum, you need know-how. And here it is....

Each entry has a brief explanation, followed by a reference to an issue, so that you can hunt down the full lucid, in-depth, ACE assessment.

If, however, you missed an issue because you were abroad on a covert SAS operation, or nursing a sick relative in Botswana, or some other unlikely excuse, fret no longer. Back issues are available for all issues from ACE 4 inclusive (except ACE 11) at the giveaway price of £2.50 each in the UK and £3.50 each for overseas. These prices include post and packaging (surface mail). Overseas readers wanting airmail delivery should enquire as to the cost at the address below, listing the issues required.

To order, clearly list the required issue numbers and send them, along with your full name and address and a cheque or postal order for the full payment made payable to ACE magazine, to: **ACE Back Issues, PO Box 500, Leicester LE99 6AA.**

- **ACE CONFERENCES** give you the only opportunity to meet software houses and talk to them about their games. Lunch is supplied and admission is free to subscribers - who also receive priority allocation. ACE readers have already visited Domark(Issue 34), Activision (Issue 36) and Mirrorsoft. [ACE37]
- **ASAT (AVIONICS SITUATIONAL AWARENESS TRAINER)**, combat flight simulator for the US Air Force by Perceptronics. Uses Falcon software by Spectrum Holobyte/Mirrorsoft. Features include: networking for multi-player action, tactile feedback and fingertip weapon selection. [ACE14]
- **BATMAN DIGITAL JUSTICE** is the world's first interactive hypercomic by Pepe Moreno. "Digital is the art medium of the future." [ACE30]
- **BATTLETECH,** "the world's first complete computer simulation for play", featuring multi-player cockpits equipped with 40Mhz 16 million colour graphics processors, stereo spatial sound and lifelike controls as you command 31st century Mechs. [ACE28]
- **BIT BOPPER**, the world's first total audio-visual entertainment system by Technation. Alex Blok's cyberscratch bit-tripper packs twin 32-bit decks, Sony erasable optical disc and custom-made video samplers. [ACE19]
- **CD-I** (Compact Disc Interactive) is destined to become the entertainment and education medium of the 90's. [ACE9/21/22/24/32/33/35]. Check out Issue 30 for multi-media principles (hypermedia in particular) and issue 24 for a preview of the Philips CD-I system.

Not hip to Hypergames? Feeling confused by CD-I? Mind's a void when it comes to VOOGs? ACE has the answer....

- **CDTV,** Commodore's attempt to bring multimedia to the mass-market. An Amiga with built-in CD-ROM drive and CD-audio capability, redesigned to look like a VCR. [ACE34]
- **COSMIC OSMO,** the world's first hypergame - courtesy of Cyan Software/Activision. Check out issue 23 for the first review, issue 24 for a feature on hypergames, and issue 30 for general hypermdia coverage. New Osmo CD-ROM version featured in issue 36.
- **DUNE,** the world's first hypergame creator by CRL. [ACE30]
- **DUNGEON MASTER**, seminal 949 ACE-Rated fantasy role-playing game by FTL/Mirrorsoft. [ACE8]
- **FLARE TECHNOLOGY**, trio of talented Cambridge-based games hardware engineers. Their custom-designed Flare One micro formed the basis of the Konix console. [ACE11]
- **FUJITSU FM TOWNS**, a 32-bit 16 million colour computer with built-in CD-ROM drive. If you bought ACE 31 you could have won one! [ACE27]
- **HYPERGAMES** like Cosmic Osmo and Batman Digital Justice are paving the way for CD-I entertainment. [ACE24/30]
- **INMOS FLIGHT SIMULATOR**, the world's first multi-player Transputer game running at 23 frames per second on 11 Transputers. [ACE7]
- **INTEGRATED FLIGHT AND ENTERTAINMENT SERVICES SYSTEM**, Plessey's answer to boring plane journeys - video games displayed on the seat in front of you. [ACE25]
- **INTERACTIVE VIDEO TAPE**, an alternative to CD-I. [ACE26]
- **JOYSTICKS,** fortunately ACE hasn't been desperate enough to write a joystick review in three years!
- **KONIX CONSOLE**, a powerful British console with revolutionary built-in joystick controller which could change into a steering wheel, motorbike handle or aeroplane yoke. Ultimately failed due to a lack of marketing money. Rumours suggest a new buyer is interested. [ACE18/25]
- **LIGHTSPEED SPRITES**, three researchers from Carnegie Mellon University, USA have developed an algorithm enabling them to generate graphical simulations of objects seen travelling at 99% of the speed of light. [ACE34]
- **MEDIA LAB**, Boston-based research institute with one simple brief - invent the future. People at this Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) facility are working on computer generated holograms, interactive computer newspapers and virtual reality man-machine interfaces. [ACE9]
- **NEO-GEO**, a new home- and arcade-based games console from SNK in Japan, with storage capacity for 64Mb games cartridges and IC card capability. ACE gave you an exclusive chance to win one in issue 34. [ACE32/34]
- **POPULOUS**, highly invluential 963 ACE-Rated arcade strategy game by Bullfrog/Electronic Arts. [ACE18/19]
- **RENDERMAN**, the unique 3D graphics system by Pixar which creates polygons with photorealistic detail. [ACE35]
- **SIM CITY**, another influential 945 ACE-Rated game – the urban simulator by Maxis Software/Infogrammes. See also SIM EARTH by Maxis Software/Ocean in ACE 35. [ACE24]
- **THEATRE SIMULATOR**, Walt Disney's hitech theme park ride come flight simulator based around the movie magic of Star Wars. Experience it for yourself at Disney's theme parks in California, Florida, Japan or Paris (in 1992). [ACE27]
- **TURBOEXPRESS,** currently the best colour handheld console - a portable version of the NEC PC Engine, fully compatible with existing games cartridges. [ACE35]
- **ULTIMA VI**, 950 ACE-Rated fantasy role-playing game from Origin/Mindscape. [ACE31/33]
- **VOOGs** (Voice-Operated Online Games) use voice recognition technology to allow spoken commands by the caller. The ACE Interactive News Line utilises similar voice-tech. Just dial 0898 555563. Calls cost 38p per minute peak, 25p per minute off-peak. [ACE11]
- **ZARCH**, influential 979 ACE-Rated shoot'em-up by David Braben using a new solid 3D viewpoint. [ACE3]

TNT – IT'S DYNAMITE

There's another very good reason to check out back issues – because they could help you crack that game that's got you climbing up the walls and pulling hair out of the dog. There are four pages of tricks, tactics, and shameless cheats in every issue of ACE – a goldmine for a man picking his way through a minefield. So...which issue do you check to find the answers? Aha! We haven't got the space to tell you! So you'll just have to wait till next month, when we publish the TNT Gamesbusting Guide – a complete database of all the games we've covered in ACE...and which issue to find them in.

HOW TO PLACE YOUR ENTRY

All you have to do is send off the form below, together with your payment;
Entries to the Pink Pages cost just £6.00 each. (Except for helpline which is free).

- The maximum is 20 words except for Helpline. (Helpline entries can be extended to 100 words max – use another sheet of paper if necessary).
- The service is NOT open to trade advertisers.
- We will print your advertisement in the first available issue.
- Entries which could be interpreted as encouraging software piracy will not be accepted.

ENTRY FORM

POST TO: **ACE Readers Page,**
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THE BLITTER END

ALOHA ACTIVISION

Activision, the veteran American software house, has decided to stop supporting the Amiga, ST, Spectrum, C64 and CPC. Instead the company will concentrate on the PC, Nintendo Entertainment System, Gameboy, Super Famicom and Compact Disc projects. Activision's UK operation in Reading has been immediately cut from 34 to 10 personnel, and there will be only two people working for Activision UK by January 1991.

Although this decision is a shock, the reasons for it have been on the cards for years. Activision US, now called Mediagenic, lost nearly $20 million dollars last year, and is facing a $6 million dollar bill after losing a long and embittered court battle with Magnavox. This Philips subsidiary has successfully claimed copyright infringement on a video game from the early eighties. Activision also spent millions of dollars buying prestigious adventure developer, Infocom, only to close it down earlier this year. Mediagenic is believed to be up for sale, but customers have been thin on the ground.

The whole situation is very sad. Activsion has sold some great games in the past. It started in the early 80's producing video games cartridges for the Atari VCS. David Crane's *Pitfall* probably being its best console release. A switch to micros in the mid-80's brought even greater success with the classic *Pastfinder*, briliant *Hero* and playable *River Raid* – plus my personal favourite, *Park Patrol*.

Actvision produced two of the most original computer games ever (*Alter Ego* and *Little Computer People*) and, in 1984, one of the best selling computer games ever, *Ghostbusters*.

Other Activision titles include: *Aliens, Predator, R-Type, Afterburner, Warhead, Hammerfist, Rampage, Galaxy Force II, Power Drift, Mechwarrior, Howard the Duck, Hacker, Die Hard and Ghostbusters II*.

Activison UK also handled System Three, Sierra On-Line and Lucasfilm games in the past including: *The Last Ninja, IK+, Leisure Suit Larry, Rescue on Fractalus, Koronis Rift, The Eidolon and Ballblazer*.

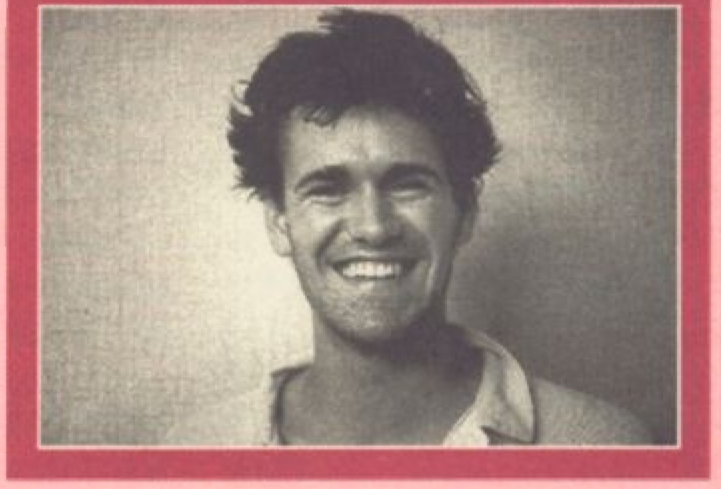
ACE HAPPY HOUR HOTLINE

You've already met the new fACEs on the magazine, David Upchurch (top) and Alex Ruranski, in the beginning of the all-new Pink Pages. Now you can actually speak to these self-confessed games addicts via our special ACE HAPPY HOUR HOTLINE.

Are you stuck on the 8th level of Moon Megablasters II? What games is ACE playing this week? Which video games console should you buy? When will the Fujitsu FM Towns, NEC PC Engine or Nintendo Super Famicom become officially available in the UK? Have you got any questions regarding Advanced Computer Entertainment?

ACE has all the answers. Just call our HAPPY HOUR HOTLINE on 071 251 6222 and ask for David or Alex. The Hotline is open Monday-Friday from 5pm-6pm (it will temporarily close every month during the ACE deadline period). Sorry, we *cannot* accept calls outside the Happy Hour.

And while we're talking fACES, we thought it was a pretty shabby state of affairs that although us editorial chaps get our mugs in the magazine, the man who puts them there doesn't. We therefore trust our female readers will apreciate the likeness below of Art Editor Jim Willis, who – and no kidding here – has done so much work on ACE over the past few months.



PLAYING GAMES FOR BRITAIN'S FUTURE

The success of Britain's future business depends on you – the dedicated games playing public. According to a recent report by the MSC (Manpower Services Commission), British industry should harness your interest and enthusiasm for Advanced Computer Entertainment, to prepare you for dealing with mechanismo for the rest of your working life.

So the next time you're playing *Defender* or *G-Loc* in the arcades, keep an eye out for scout from BP, Barclays Bank or British Airways.

HALLOWEEN COMPETITION TOKEN

Cut out this token and stick it on a postcard with the answer to the question asked in last month's issue. If you win the Origin Halloween Competition with this token you'll get an extra £500 spending money! See ACE 36 for further details.

£500

ACE HALLOWEEN TOKEN

HANDHELD HELP

A.Reader has written in with a handy tip for Gameboy and Lynx owners spending too much money on AA batteries. "Save money buying new batteries by swapping the batteries in your friends Walkman."

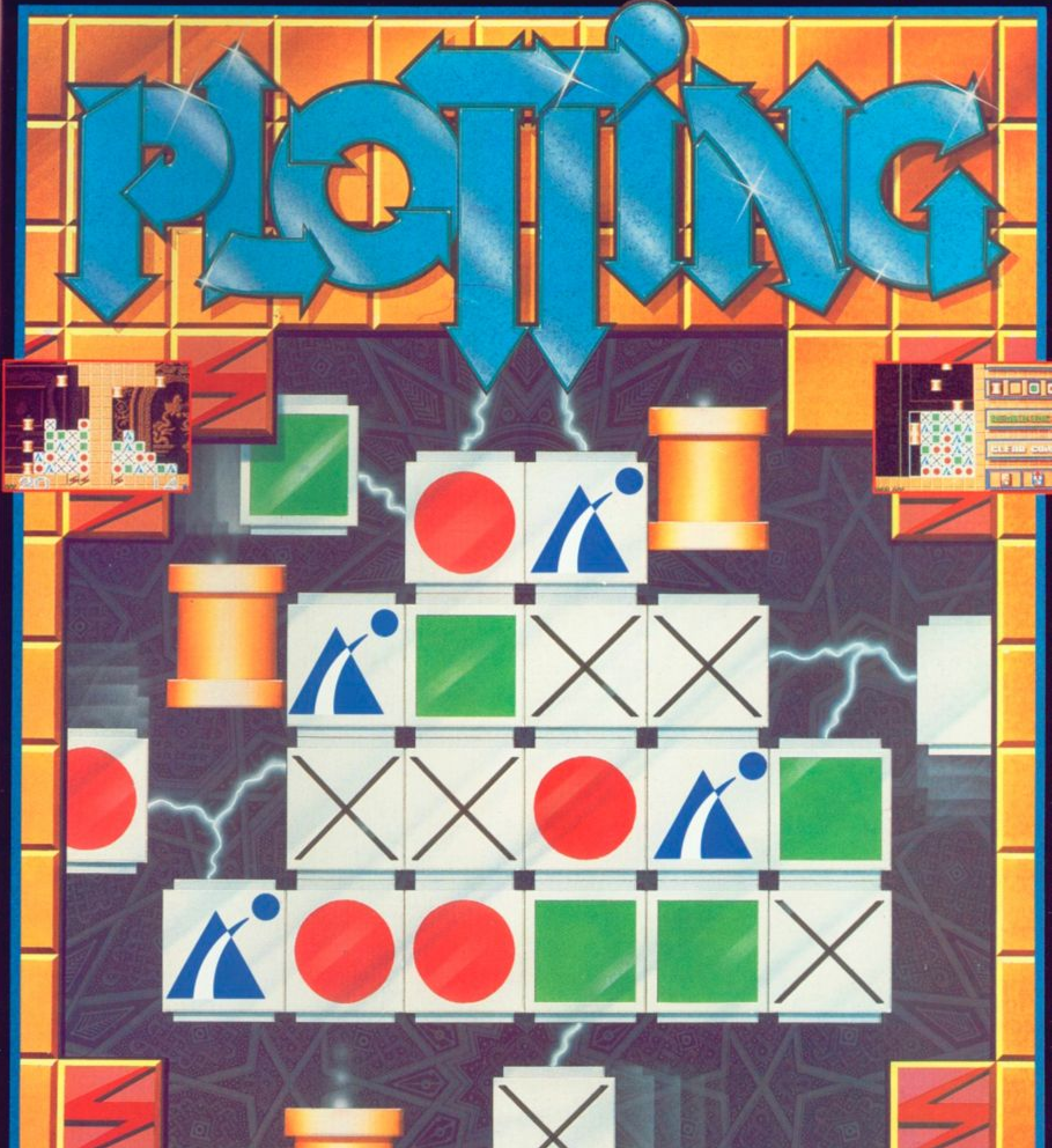
MAKE A DATE IN YOUR DIARY

Don't forget CES... "the greatest gameshow in the universe. The European Computer Entertainment Show is the only show dedicated to the latest in games software and hardware from the leading brand names. Enjoy the live entertainment. Meet your favourite celebrities. Maybe even appear on TV. Try out the newest games and equipment from some of the biggest names in the industry including Commodore, Sega, Nintendo, Amstrad, Ocean, Mirrorsoft, US Gold, Virgin/Mastertronic, Domark, Gremlin and Accolade. Contribute to Childline charity. Visit Living Room of the Future, sponsored by ACE."

CES, Earls Court, London, 15-16 September, 10am-6pm, see you there!

● Blit Blit

PLOT YOUR OPPONENTS DOWNFALL AND...STRIKE



ADDICTION!

It all seems so easy, but can you beat the micro or your partner, at this hideously mind boggling game.

Addiction!...that's the name of the game. The concept is simple ...destroying blocks! But once you've got control of those bricks will you ever let go?

TAITO

Special blocks will give you extra lives... GREAT!... but believe me, you'll need to take every advantage of this software's hardware! You'll need the skill of a Rubi-Cube master and the reflexes of a pigeon at a skeet shoot! Plot your move, take aim and block 'em out!... It's that simple... as simple as grilling ice cubes!

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FROM THE CREATORS OF

FUTURE WARS

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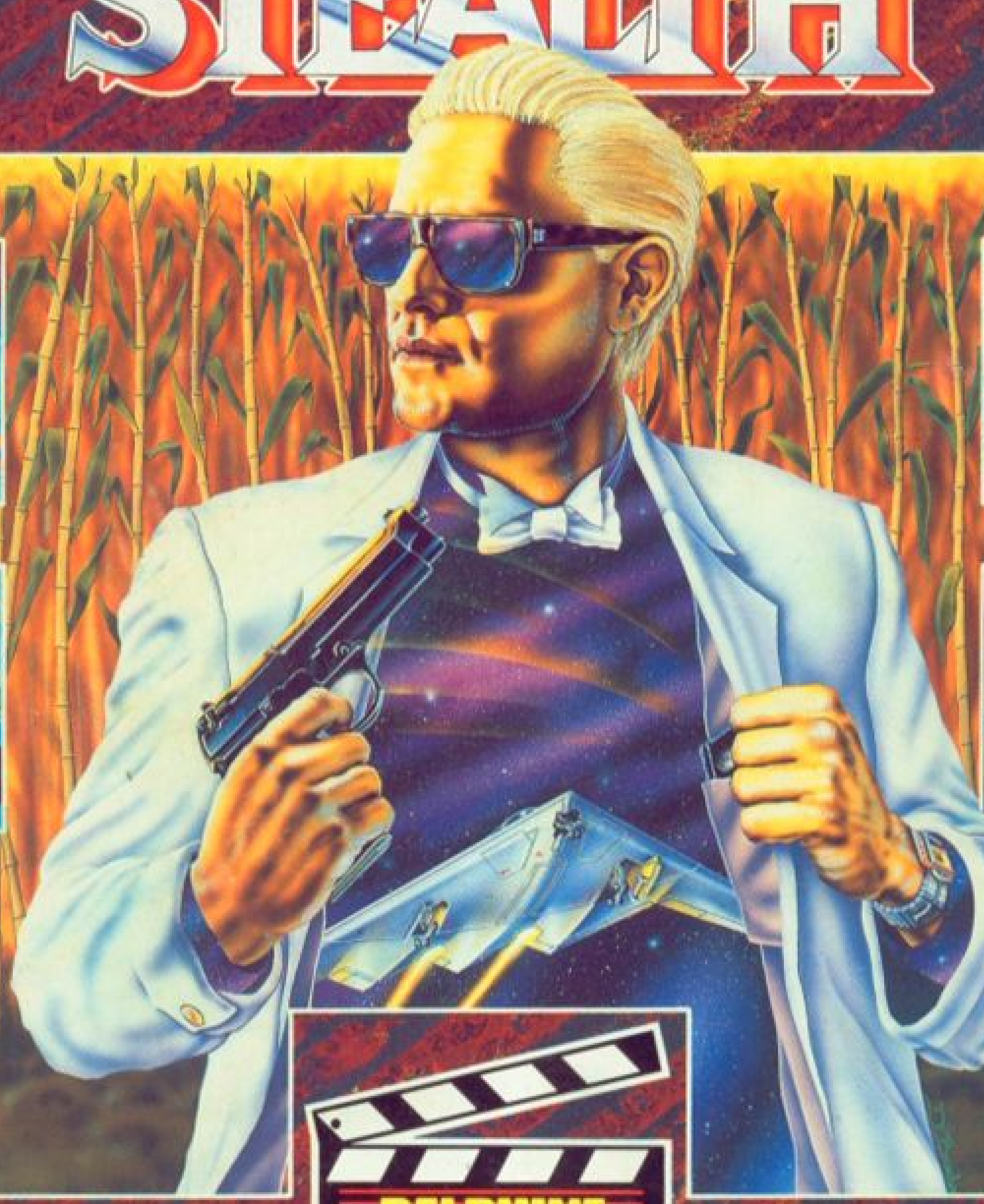
ANOTHER GREAT Cinématique™ PRODUCTION ...

OPERATION STEALTH

Screen shots from Atari ST version



Screen shots from Amiga version

DELPHINE SOFTWARE

Set in the world of international espionage, Operation Stealth plunges you headlong into a brand-new Cinematique™ interactive adventure game.

Operation Stealth is the second game to feature the exclusive Cinematique™ operating system, which has been considerably refined and developed since the release of Future Wars.

- Entirely mouse-controlled.
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- Fully compatible with Ad-Lib and Roland Sound Cards (PC Version).
- PC version features 256 colours (VGA).
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